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ABSTRACT

This issue of "Media & Values" provides essays and teaching ideas for addressing the influence of the media in society and the growing incidence of addiction. Articles in this issue include: (1) "Culture of Addiction" (Rosalind Silver); (2) "Crack and the Box" (Pete Hamill); (3) "When It Comes to Drugs, Beware the Censor's Fix" (David Musto); (4) "How Free is Commercial Speech?" (Steven Shiffrin; Kerry Gerot); (5) "Deadly Persuasion" (Jean Kilbourne); (6) "Cigarettes Under Fire" (Richard Pollay); (7) "The More Things Change..."; (8) "Anti-Smoking Campaign Fights Fire with Ads" (Eric Vollmer); (9) "Alcohol and Television" (Kathryn Montgomery); (10) "How Advertisers Sell Addiction"; (11) "The Selling of Addiction to Women" (Carol Moog); (12) "Learning from Television: Commercials Influence Kids"; (13) "Cultural Dynamics Mold Hispanic Marketing" (Bruce Maxwell; Michael Jacobson); (14) "Cancer is an Equal Opportunity Disease" (Marilyn Kern-Foxworth); (15) "Giants in the Advertising World" (Beth White); (16) "The New Third World Fight Is over Tobacco" (David Holley); (17) "Resources for Follow-Up"; and (18) "Just Say Yes to Media Literacy" (Elizabeth Thoman). (EH)

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FATAL ATTRACTION:
The Selling of Addiction

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7 Myths Alcohol Advertisers Want You to Believe p. 10

Cigarettes Under Fire p. 13

Crack and the Box p. 4

Special Double Issue!

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In addition to publishing *Media&Values*, the Center creates educational curriculum materials for local use, organizes forums and conferences, and maintains an information and resource center on the media issues of our time. Funding for the Center comes from subscriptions and memberships along with individual donations, foundation grants and organizational co-sponsorships.

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Editorial/Business Office
1962 South Shenandoah Street, Los Angeles, CA 90034 (213)559-2944

In Canada
85 St. Clair Avenue E, Room 500, Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M8

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Letters to the Editor: Comments and feedback are always welcome. Write: **Editor**, *Media&Values*, 1962 S. Shenandoah, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

Executive Director
Elizabeth Thoman, CHM

Editor
Rosalind Silver

Managing Editor
Kerry Gerot

Educational Coordinator
Jay Davis

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Carolyn Lenert

Resources
Beth White

Administration and Business
Zahava Gerstenfeld

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Circulation
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Abington Graphics, Los Angeles

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CULTURE OF ADDICTION

Why This Issue on Drugs Doesn't Cover Crack

By Rosalind Silver

"No street-corner crack dealer ever had a better line than the one Madison Avenue delivers at every commercial break: Buy now! Quick thrills!"

— Barbara Ehrenreich, *Ms.*

When the *Media&Values* editorial staff first started thinking and reading about an issue on media and drugs in the middle of 1990, there was no shortage of material. It seemed that every magazine in America had done a cover story on crack houses, "the Colombian connection," and, above all, "the drug war."

Yet as we read, we had a feeling of disquiet. The problem of illegal drugs, with their physical and mental wreckage and accompanying crime, was serious. But it seemed only the tip of the iceberg. While jumping gladly onto the drug war bandwagon, few members of the media seemed to have insights that could explain why drugs had become such a problem. Nor did any of them seem to see themselves as anything but neutral bystanders.

An article by well-known journalist Pete Hamill provided a clue. Why, he pondered, has drug addiction become a severe problem only in the last few decades? Is the problem cyclical, as some say? Or have there been other cultural changes that encourage addictive patterns in society at large?

The answer, to Hamill, is *television.* Obviously, television is an important cultural element that became prominent over the last 30 to 40 years. Like drugs, television provides what he calls "an unearned high," a rush of vicarious feeling. Its addictive qualities have been pointed out by many experts. And, again, like drug addicts, TV devotees tend to become alienated and isolated from the outside world.

I don't want to reproduce Hamill's whole argument here. You can turn the page and read it for yourself. But it caused us to wonder: Instead of being an innocent and noble reporter, is the media instead a co-participant in society's addiction?

What we see — not only in the media but all around us — is an expectation that life will be easy, simple and exciting, for everybody and at all times. The reality that life is a race, a challenge and at times a struggle has been replaced by demands for immediate fulfillment. Instead of pursuing happiness, we want it to fall in our laps.

Addiction feeds, and feeds on, this fantasy. But addictive behavior comes in many guises. Increasingly, it is obvious that the "problem" with drugs is not drugs, but addiction.

A Subtle Seduction

The way to get a handle on it is not by covering the criminality of crack cocaine but by uncovering the subtle ways tobacco and alcohol advertising entice us to addiction. Although legal (but frequently lethal) tobacco and alcohol provide a valuable case study of how mass media both reflect and shape our world and our worldview.

That's not to say people's desire to buy easy solutions to their problems is new. Nineteenth Century snake oil salesmen sometimes scored huge successes. But today's sellers of dreams aren't bound by the confines of a medicine wagon.

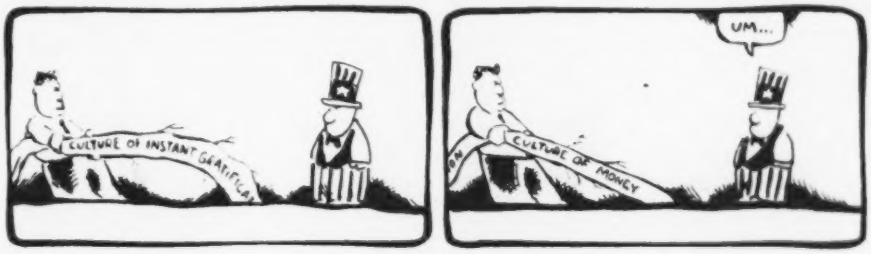
It's no surprise that advertising and the media grew up together. And now that the whiskey drummer beats a society-wide drum and the cigar store Indian has been replaced by the Marlboro man's myth, the advertisers of these products have a huge advantage. Not only can they reach us all, any time of day or night, but we bring an advertising-ready sensibility to their messages. Our familiarity with their images has bred, not contempt, but a dangerous lack of indignation. This is made abundantly clear by our blas é reactions to what is now known as "image marketing," the commonly accepted practice in which companies associate themselves with something culturally worthy, hoping the positive image will rub off.

ADBUSTERS Quarterly, the Canadian environmental and media magazine, helps put advertisers' duplicity into context: "Imagine crack suppliers sponsoring the local ballet or orchestra. The name brand Cocaine plastered over racing cars and the backs of famous athletes. Better yet: heroin suppliers running serious little magazine spots to suggest that the U.S. Bill of Rights really means that advertising of any product, even a lethal one, is legal."

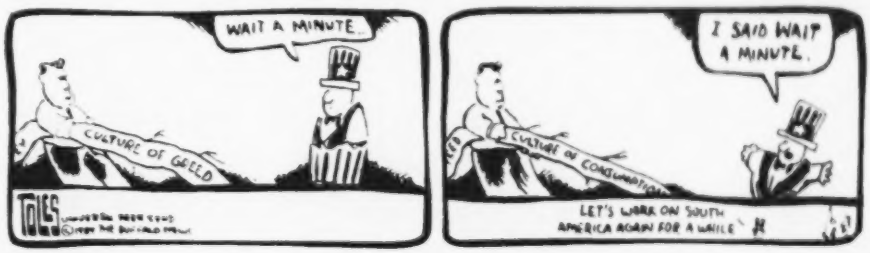
The truth is, today's alcohol and cigarette advertising has direct links to the pioneer-

ing efforts of modern advertising's founders in the '20s and '30s. As recounted in Richard Pollay's article "Blowing Away the PR Smokescreen" on page 13, today's Virginia Slim's ads are the direct descendents of early ads that linked cigarette smoking with women's liberation. Examples aimed at other groups are many.

How do they do it? As Jean Kilbourne explains on p. 10, advertising — and alcohol advertising particularly — survives on the creation of myths. When the product has risks, the fairy tales advertisers tell can be a screen for real dangers. Part of our acceptance of these myths undoubtedly lies in the familiarity of the products themselves. Outside the Americas at least, alcohol has been part of human life and culture for thousands of years. The indigenous American herb, tobacco, with its 350,000 annual tobacco-related U.S. death rate (more than 2.7 million worldwide) may be the Native Americans' best revenge for conquest and oppression. But its use in Western culture still goes back centuries.



The risks of tobacco usage weren't well established in the '20s. The perils of alcoholism, on the other hand, were perceived as the kind of moral and physical threat that deserved a constitutional amendment. The poor success of the alcohol ban that it mandated still gives pause to would-be prohibitionists.



While the persistence of human foibles tends to remain the same, much else has changed. One major shift is the pervasiveness of media images in our lives. The media wave that washes over each of us every day tends to carry all before it. We're so accustomed to the culture of addiction surrounding us that we don't pause to take a second look at the misleading messages of alcohol and tobacco advertisers. Awakening to the problem is the first step. But society's remedies shouldn't stop there.

Banning or otherwise restricting advertising for alcohol and especially cigarettes has been recommended by many experts, while others (particularly alcoholic beverage and tobacco companies) question whether such limitations to commercial speech would be constitutional. On page 8, First Amendment expert Steven Shiffrin makes a persuasive case for the constitutionality of a ban or other possible restrictions on cigarette and alcohol advertising. After doing this issue, we think legislation enacting such measures deserves more discussion and action.

In the meantime, other groups are exploring other ways of discouraging "business-as-usual" for the multi-product conglomerates that tobacco companies have become. Marshalling techniques that became familiar in the fight against investment in South Africa, religious groups, pension fund administrators and individuals — including such major investors as Harvard, Johns Hopkins and the City University of New York — are using shareholder challenges, divestiture of tobacco stock and review of advertising practices to put pressure on companies that continue to profit from tobacco sales. The campaign recently expanded to challenge companies that do *any* business with tobacco conglomerates.

Boycotts are another avenue of protest being explored by some groups. The Media Foundation, publishers of *ADBUSTERS Quarterly*, called for a Philip Morris boycott, not just of tobacco products, but of selected items from the major food brands the company produces. ADBUSTERS also called for a "dirty dozen" boycott of the 12 largest U.S. magazines (including *Time*, *Newsweek*, *People* and *TV Guide*) that accept cigarette ads.

Such efforts require careful organization and maintenance, but have often proven effective over time. If nothing else, negative publicity may help speed the eventual demise of the tobacco-based profit center for these companies.

But boycotts, corporate challenges and advertising bans ultimately depend for their effectiveness on breaking the power of media images — the main goal of the media literacy movement. Even before advertising bans pass Congress or boycotts have time to work, everyone who picks up a magazine or turns on a television set can apply the process of what media literacy theorists call "deconstruction" to the alcohol and tobacco ads they see.

The Reflection/Action resource on pages 30-31, is a perfect tool for this purpose. The workshop process that goes along with this issue is another excellent way to recognize and confront the manipulative images that make tobacco and alcohol advertising so effective. Taking a second look at these ads can help them lose their effectiveness forever. An example lies in the ready acceptance of the advertising mindset that creates cartoon characters like Camel's Joe Cool and Bud Light's Spuds MacKenzie. Unless we stop to question their appeal to the children who are too young for the products they advertise, they seem innocuous.

Like most people, I'm hardly impervious to media images. My discovery of Bogart/Bacall and Bette Davis movies probably had a lot to do with my starting smoking as a '60s college student. I quit before my father's death from lung cancer in 1982, but even after that, until I began working on this issue I still took cigarette ads for granted.

I never will again.

Rosalind Silver is editor of Media&Values.

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CRACK AND THE BOX:
Television Helps Pave the Way to Addiction

By Pete Hamill

One sad rainy morning last winter, I talked to a woman who was addicted to crack cocaine. She was 22, stiletto-thin, with eyes as old as tombs. She was living in two rooms in a welfare hotel with her children who were two, three and five years of age. Her story was the usual tangle of human woe: early pregnancy, dropping out of school, vanished men, smack and then crack, tricks with johns in parked cars to pay for the dope. I asked her why she did drugs. She shrugged in an empty way and couldn't really answer beyond "makes me feel good." While we talked and she told her tale of squalor, the children ignored us. They were watching TV.

Walking back to my office in the rain, I brooded about the woman, her zombielike children, and my own callous indifference. I'd heard so many versions of the same story that I almost never wrote them anymore: The sons of similar women, glimpsed a dozen years ago, are now in Dannemora or Soledad or Joliet; in a hundred cities, their daughters are moving into the same loveless rooms. As I walked, a series of homeless men approached me for change, most of them junkies. Others sat in doorways, staring at nothing. They were additional casualties of our time of plague, demoralized reminders that although this country holds only two percent of the world's population, it consumes 65 percent of the world's supply of hard drugs.

Why, for God's sake? Why do so many millions of Americans of all ages, races and classes choose to spend all or part of their lives stupefied? I've talked to hundreds of addicts over the years; some were my friends. But none could give sensible answers. They stutter about the pain of the world, about despair or boredom, the urgent need for magic or pleasure in a society empty of both. But then they just shrug. Americans have the money to buy drugs; the supply is plentiful. But almost nobody in power asks, *Why*? Least of all, George Bush and his drug warriors.

William Bennett talks vaguely about the heritage of '60s permissiveness, the collapse of Traditional Values and all that. But he and Bush offer the traditional American excuse: It Is Somebody Else's Fault. This posture set the stage for the self-righteous invasion of Panama, the bloodiest drug arrest in world history. Bush even accused Manuel Noriega of "poisoning our children." But he never asked why so many Americans demand the poison.

And then, on that rainy morning in New York, I saw another one of those ragged men staring out at the rain from a doorway. I suddenly remembered the inert postures of the children in that welfare hotel, and I thought: *television*.

Ah, no, I muttered to myself: too simple. Something as complicated as drug addiction can't be blamed on television. Come on... But I remembered all those desperate places I'd visited as a reporter, where there were no books and a TV set was always playing and the older kids had gone off somewhere to shoot smack, except for the kid who was at the mortuary in a coffin. I also remembered when I was a boy in the '40s and early '50s, and drugs were a minor sideshow, a kind of dark little rumor. And there was one major difference between that time and this: *television*.

We had unemployment then; illiteracy, poor living conditions, racism, governmental stupidity, a gap between rich and poor. We didn't have the all-consuming presence of television in our lives. Now two generations of Americans have grown up with television from their earliest

moments of consciousness. Those same American generations are afflicted by the pox of drug addiction.

Only 35 years ago, drug addiction was not a major problem in this country. We had some drug addicts at the end of the 19th Century, hooked on the cocaine in patent medicines. During the placid '50s, Commissioner Harry Anslinger pumped up the budget of the old Bureau of Narcotics with fantasies of reefer madness. Heroin was sold and used in most major American cities, while the bebop generation of jazz musicians got jammed up with horse.

TV Generation

Until the early '60s, narcotics were still marginal to American life; they weren't the $120 billion market they make up today. If anything, those years have an eerie innocence. In 1955 there were 31.7 million TV sets in use in the country (the number is now past 184 million). But the majority of the audience had grown up without the dazzling new medium. They embraced it, were diverted by it, perhaps even loved it, but they weren't *formed* by it. That year, the New York police made a mere 1,234 felony drug arrests; in 1988 it was 43,901. They confiscated 97 *ounces* of cocaine for the entire year; last year it was hundreds of pounds. During each year of the '50s in New York, there were only about a hundred narcotics-related deaths. But by the end of the '60s, when the first generation of children *formed* by television had come to maturity (and thus to the marketplace), the number of such deaths had risen to 1,200. The same phenomenon was true in every major American city.

Americans have the money to buy drugs; the supply is plentiful. But almost nobody in power asks: why?

In the last Nielsen survey of American viewers, the average family was watching the television seven hours a day. This has never happened before in history. No people has ever been entertained for seven hours a *day*. The Elizabethans didn't go to the theater seven hours a day. The pre-TV generation did not go to the movies seven hours a day. Common sense tells us that this all-pervasive diet of instant imagery, sustained now for 40 years, must have changed us in profound ways.

Television, like drugs, dominates the lives of its addicts. And though some lonely Americans leave their sets on without watching them, using them as electronic companions, television usually absorbs its viewers the way drugs absorb their users. Viewers can't work or play while watching television; they can't read; they can't be out on the streets, falling in love with the wrong people, learning how to quarrel and compromise with other human beings. In short, they are asocial. So are drug addicts.

One Michigan State University study in the early '80s offered a group of four- and five-year-olds the choice of giving up television or giving up their fathers. Fully one-third said they would give up Daddy. Given a similar choice (between cocaine or heroin and father, mother, brother, sister, wife, husband, children, job), almost every stone junkie would do the same.

There are other disturbing similarities. Television itself is a consciousness-altering instrument. With the touch of a button, it takes you out of the "real" world in which you reside and can place you at a basketball game, the back alleys of Miami, the streets of Bucharest, or the cartoony living rooms of Sitcom Land. Each move from channel to channel alters mood, usually with music or a laugh track. On any given evening, you can laugh, be frightened, feel tension, thump with excitement. You can even tune in *MacNeil/Lehrer* and feel sober.

But none of these abrupt shifts in mood is *earned*. They are attained as easily as popping a pill. Getting news from television, for example, is simply not the same experience as reading it in a newspaper. Reading is *active*. The reader must decode little symbols called words, then create images or ideas and make them connect; at its most basic level, reading is an act of the imagination. But the television viewer is *passive* and doesn't go through that process. The words are spoken to him by Dan Rather or Tom Brokaw or Peter Jennings. There isn't much decoding to do when watching television, no time to think or ponder before the next set of images and spoken words appears to displace the present one. The reader, being active, works at his or her own pace; the viewer, being passive, proceeds at the pace determined by the show. Except at the highest levels, television never demands that its audience take part in an act of imagination. Reading always does.

In short, television works on the same imaginative and intellectual level as psychoactive drugs. If prolonged television viewing makes the young passive (dozens of studies indicate that it does), then moving to drugs has a certain coherence. Drugs provide an unearned high (in contrast to the earned rush that comes from a feat accomplished, a human breakthrough earned by sweat or thought or love).

The drug plague coincides with the unspoken assumption of most television shows: Life should be easy.

And because the television addict and the drug addict are alienated from the hard and scary world, they also feel they make no difference in its complicated events.

The drug plague also coincides with the unspoken assumption of most television shows: Life should be *easy*. The most complicated events are summarized on TV news in a minute or less. Cops confront murder, chase the criminals and bring them to justice (usually violently) within an hour. In commercials, you drink the right beer and you get the girl. *Easy*! So why should real life be a grind? Why should any American have to spend years mastering a skill or craft, or work eight hours a day at an unpleasant job, or endure the compromises and crises of a marriage? Nobody *works* on TV (except cops, doctors and lawyers).

Love stories on television are about falling in love or breaking up; the long, steady growth of a marriage — its essential dailiness — is seldom explored, except as comedy. Life on television is almost always simple: good guys and bad, nice girls

and whores, smart guys and dumb. And if life in the real world isn't that simple, well, hey, man, have some dope, man, be happy, feel good.

Most Americans under the age of 50 have now spent their lives absorbing television; that is, they've had the structures of drama pounded into them. Drama is always about conflict. So news shows, politics and advertising are now all shaped by those structures. Nobody will pay attention to anything as complicated as the part played by Third World debt in the expanding production of cocaine; it's easier to focus on Manuel Noriega, a character right out of *Miami Vice*, and believe that even in real life there's a Mister Big.

What is to be done? Television is certainly not going away, but its addictive qualities can be controlled. It's a lot easier to "just say no" to television than to heroin or crack. As a beginning, parents must take immediate control of the sets, teaching children to watch specific television *programs*, not "television," to get out of the house and play with other kids. Elementary and high schools must begin teaching television/media literacy as a subject, the way literature is taught, showing children how shows are made, how to distinguish between the true and the false, how to recognize cheap emotional manipulation. All Americans should spend more time reading. And thinking.

Television is certainly not going away, but its addictive qualities can be controlled.

For years, the defenders of television have argued that the networks are only giving the people what they want. That might be true. But so is the Medellin cartel.

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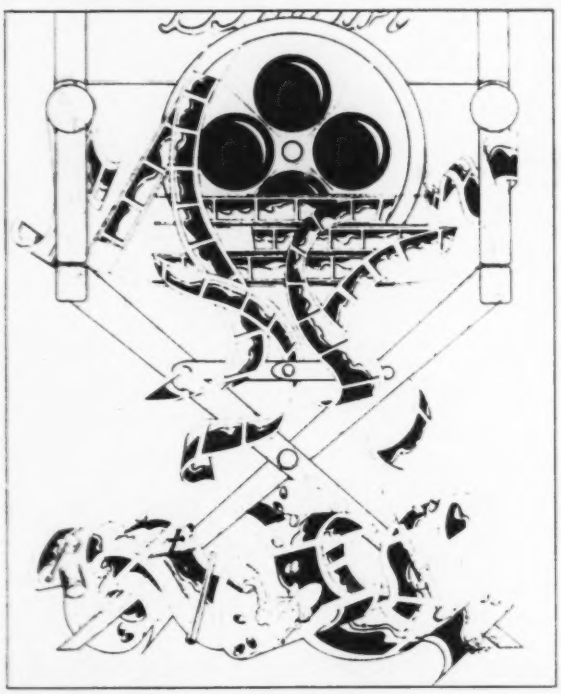
Dan Hubig is a free-lance illustrator and art director for the Oakland Tribune. *Copyright 1984. Reprinted by permission.*

Media Activism Mobilizes Entertainment

Entertainment programming can play a major role in educating viewers about the risks of alcohol and drug use. Several media industry organizations have initiated programs to encourage responsible programming and special media events. Most have useful resources or sponsor public projects on issues related to addiction.

Academy for Television Arts and Sciences. The organizer of an industry-wide Substance Abuse Conference in 1986, ATAS currently acts as a liaison between the entertainment industry and various national substance abuse prevention projects and is active in a variety of outreach programs. In a television first, its half-hour animated substance abuse special, *Cartoon All-Stars to the Rescue*, was simulcast on major network and cable channels in April 1990. A video, funded by a grant from Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, was distributed free nationwide. To order the video, call (800)627-7646. ATAS, 5220 Lankershim Blvd., N. Hollywood, CA 91601; (818)754-2800.

Center for Health Communication, Harvard School of Public Health. Seeks to mobilize the power of the mass media to motivate healthful behavior. A major program, the **Harvard Alcohol Project**, has worked closely with writers and producers to promote the concept of "designated driver" on entertainment television. Center for Health Communication, 677 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115; (617)432-1038.



Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. Created in 1983 to fill the need for partnerships between the entertainment community and government, health and safety organizations, the EIC's various outreach programs promote industry representation and involvement in such social concerns as alcohol and drug abuse prevention, drunk driving, traffic safety and AIDS awareness. Resources include a speaker's bureau and a selection of audio-visual and print materials. EIC, 4444 Riverside Drive, Ste. 203, Burbank, CA 91505; (818)841-9933.

Scott Newman Center. Founded the Scott Newman Drug Abuse Prevention Award recognizing television programming's role in alcohol and drug abuse prevention. The center also supports *PSA (Prevent Substance Abuse)*, in which kids create their own public service ads, and *Drug-Free Kids: A Parents' Guide*, a nationally distributed home video designed to help parents recognize the symptoms of drug use. Scott Newman Center, 6255 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 1906, Los Angeles, CA 90028, (213)469-2029 or (800)783-6396.

Barbara Theis is a free-lance illustrator in Los Angeles.

WHEN IT COMES TO DRUGS:
Beware the Censor's Fix

By David F. Musto

Banning the use of drugs in films may have unexpected consequences, according to the author of The American Disease: Origins of Narcotics Control. *In these excerpts from his provocative review of the cyclical portrayal of drug use in films and television since the turn of the century, psychiatrist and medical historian David Musto warns against creating a "climate of ignorance" favorable to a resurgence of drug use.*

History raises an important question: Is it in our best interest to portray drug use not as it is but as we wish it would be? Movies and drugs have a long common history. Their association embraces depictions of drug use on screen, drug scandals within the industry and an outright ban on depiction of illegal drugs in the Production Code that effectively governed Hollywood for some 20 years beginning in 1934.

"Illegal drug traffic must never be presented," the code said. "Because of its evil consequences, the drug traffic should not be presented in any form. The existence of the trade should not be brought to the attention of audiences."

And so it was that Americans in the 1930s, '40s and '50s, at least those who depended on the movies for keeping posted, grew up largely ignorant of the appeal and consequences of drugs. Censorship, in that sense, was helping to set the stage for acceptance of marijuana, heroin, PCP or angel dust, cocaine and crack.

In view of the surge in opiate and cocaine use in the United States in recent years, it is interesting to note that the last wave of abuse in the country reached its peak in the decade around the turn of the century — just about the time movies arrived. The high level of consumption and its slow decline meant that in early films, depictions of drug use — favorable and unfavorable — were commonplace. Silent films showed opium dens; drugs were a source of humor in Douglas Fairbanks's *Mystery of the Leaping Fish*, a 1916 movie in which he played a hyperactive detective named Coke Ennyday. In two 1914 films — *Drug Terror* and *Narcotic Spectre* — drug use was attacked. Still, "divorce, seduction and the use of drugs were presented in film after film as symbols of the fashionable life," wrote film historian Arthur Knight in *The Liveliest Art*.

In the 1930s, however, tolerance toward films that depicted drug use evaporated along with support for other forms of behavior that critics perceived as undermining the family, stimulating violence and encouraging bad habits. Drug use was still in its long cycle of decline, and as it abated, government policy makers shifted from seeking mandatory school instruction on narcotics to a conviction that the situation was now so much improved that it would be best not even to mention the subject.

But Hollywood still had no strictures against depicting drug use. In 1934, the Roman Catholic Church moved to correct the situation. American bishops formed the National Legion of Decency to concentrate their power against Hollywood's laxity, an action generally favored by other faiths. The film industry reacted to the threat of a boycott by Catholic laity by establishing the Production Code Administration.

In the 1950s the power of the Production Code began to erode. The system that replaced it in 1968 — the Motion Picture Association of America ratings system — no longer approved or disapproved a film. Rather, it simply rated a film based on content, using one of the now familiar letters: G, PG, R or X. *(Editor's note: Drug use alone is still enough to earn an automatic PG-13 rating for a film.)*

In such a climate, American moviegoers saw the drug culture advance from the alienated characters of *Easy Rider* (1969) to the mainstream Americans of *Private Benjamin* (1980) and *Poltergeist* (1982). Although it may seem both paradoxical and arguable, the '60s were also a time when marijuana smokers themselves were laying the groundwork for the present wave of opposition to drugs. It was the marijuana smokers and their lobby who responded to an older generation's fear of cannabis by pointing out the dangers of alcohol — a substance most people had yet to recognize as a drug.

These days, marijuana use has declined in popularity, and the focus of discussion of the drug problem has been tobacco, heroin, angel dust, cocaine and crack. But attitudes in American society are changing, and Hollywood is part of American society. Like the rest of society, it has grown doubtful of the hopes and claims for drugs.

History suggests that ignorance is not bliss. It is only the illusion of bliss.

As Richard Frank, president of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, observed: "You don't see cigarettes on television anymore. Not because anybody passed a law. Writers wrote cigarettes out, directors don't use them as props and actors don't have them as a crutch."

As Hollywood turns against drugs, it is not a matter of the world outside forcing movies to portray drugs differently; it is a reciprocal relationship. The evidence is clear that antagonism to depictions of drug use in the absence of bad consequences is growing. The impulse is laudable, and the hope is that drugs will be banished from America. But history suggests that effective censorship is not the way to protect society from a climate of ignorance favorable to a resurgence of drug use and the tragedies it causes. History suggests that ignorance is not bliss. It is only the illusion of bliss.

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HOW FREE IS COMMERCIAL SPEECH?

Advertisers Wrap Themselves in the First Amendment

Steven H. Shiffrin, a professor of law at Cornell University, is the author of a First Amendment casebook and The First Amendment, Democracy and Romance. *He is a frequent writer on First Amendment issues, including advertising. He spoke to Kerry Gerot,* Media&Values' *managing editor, about current legal issues concerning substance advertising and free speech. Following are edited excerpts from their conversation.*

M&V: *Alcohol and cigarette producers claim that the U.S. Constitution protects their freedom to advertise. They claim they have a right to "commercial speech." Exactly what is commercial speech and is it protected by the Constitution?*

Shiffrin: Alcohol and cigarette producers have tried to wrap themselves in the First Amendment. One would think from their pronouncements that it protects all their activities. Commercial speech is commercial advertising, or, in the words of the U.S. Supreme Court, speech that "proposes a commercial transaction." However, the Supreme Court stated in 1986 that what's called the commercial speech doctrine does not protect their advertising .

M&V: *How would you summarize the current legal situation regarding commercial speech?*

Shiffrin: For most of the history of the republic, commercial speech received no legal protection whatsoever. Today, it occupies a subordinate position in the hierarchy of First Amendment values. Specifically, a law that promotes a substantial state interest, and by means that are no more extensive than necessary to serve that interest, is not contrary to First Amendment protections. The "interest" of course, in this case would be the public health, and an advertising ban or other restriction would be considered a reasonable means of serving that interest.

As U.S. Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark once said, there is no war between the Constitution and common sense. Cigarettes and alcoholic beverages present a major health problem. Nothing in the commercial speech doctrine prevents Congress or the states from taking reasonable steps to address the genuine public health problems associated with alcohol and cigarettes, and the Supreme Court has so recognized.

M&V: *So legally speaking, what is the key issue involved in regulating alcohol and cigarette advertising?*

Shiffrin: The main questions to consider are whether there is a significant public health problem, whether restriction of advertising would help to reduce that health problem, and whether there are less restrictive steps that could serve as well. The state legislatures or the Congress are entitled to the judgment that millions of teenagers who watch tens of thousands of beer commercials, for example, are not uninfluenced by that experience. They are entitled to assume that if fewer people consume alcohol, fewer people will abuse alcohol. In any event, Congress, for example, would be on sure footing in assuring that Americans are aware of the risks associated with the consumption.

M&V: *What are the current national restrictions on alcohol and cigarette advertising?*

Shiffrin: Television broadcasters are legally prohibited from airing advertisements for cigarette advertising, but are permitted to broadcast alcoholic beverage commercials. In general, networks voluntarily restrict television promotion of so-called hard liquor. There are also additional restrictions on tobacco that do not apply to alcoholic beverages. The U.S. Surgeon General's warnings are required by federal law to be displayed on advertisements for tobacco but not on advertisements for alcoholic beverages. Restaurant signs warning of hazards for pregnant women from drinking alcoholic beverages are also required in New York state and a number of cities across the country.

M&V: *Do you think that we will see similar warnings in alcoholic beverage advertising in the future?*

Shiffrin: I think there is a substantial chance that Congress will pass legislation that requires alcoholic beverage advertisements to carry warning labels. It's also legally possible to require televised ads for

beer and wine to carry warning notices, but there is very substantial lobbying against such proposed legislation.

M&V: *What are some of the techniques advertisers are using to sidestep those current restrictions?*

Shiffrin: Well, one of the most intriguing examples is the extent to which cigarette companies have used reverence for the First Amendment to get broadcasters to air what functions as image advertising. By sponsoring advertising which says, "We're for the First Amendment," a cigarette company (such as Philip Morris Companies Inc., a major sponsor of some of the most prominent of these ads) can get its name on television in a favorable context, one which assists their lobbying on Capitol Hill, all despite the bans against televised advertising for cigarettes. It's a very nice public relations ploy.

Another technique might be called the "back fence" method of advertising. A cigarette company buys advertising space on a sports stadium scoreboard or fence. When the game is televised, there's the ad, and the Congressional ban is circumvented. The Justice Department so far has refused to enter into any prosecutions with respect to this activity.

M&V: *Do you think this strategy to confuse the issues is working?*

Shiffrin: The American public does not scour Supreme Court opinions to examine First Amendment doctrine. But the advertising conducted by tobacco companies does have an effect. I think most Americans think, given this blitz of advertising, that the First Amendment must protect cigarette advertisers. That helps tobacco industry lobbying on Capitol Hill, because to the extent the public thinks cigarettes ought to be protected under the First Amendment, legislators are likely to respond.

M&V: *What are some of the proposed new restrictions on alcohol and cigarette advertising?*

Shiffrin: Recent legislative proposals range all the way from a total ban on the advertising of these substances to proposals for disclosing their effects. For example, one of the most interesting proposals before the last Congress would have required a kind of equal time for cigarette advertising by balancing ads in favor of smoking with advertising opposing it.

M&V: *There are several examples, particularly in California, of counter advertising, or public service advertising against smoking. Do you think it's effective?*

Shiffrin: I do know that when counter-advertising was used with respect to cigarette advertising on national television, the evidence showed a substantial decline in the consumption of cigarettes. In fact, cigarette companies lobbied to get cigarette advertising *off the air* because they didn't want counter-advertising to stay *on the air*.

M&V: *Some people are proposing an outright ban on alcohol and cigarette advertising. Would this be Constitutional in your view?*

Shiffrin: Yes, it clearly would be under a doctrine propounded in a 1986 U.S. Supreme Court decision about a law regulating gambling, *Posades de Puerto Rico Associates v. Tourism Company*. In it the court stated: "It would be a strange Constitutional doctrine which would concede to the legislature the authority to totally ban a product or activity but deny to the legislature the authority to forbid the stimulation of demand for the product or activity or advertising on behalf of those who would profit from such increased demand."

The court noted that legislative regulation of products or activities deemed harmful, such as cigarettes, alcoholic beverages and prostitution, has varied from outright prohibition on the one hand to legalization of the product or activity with restrictions on stimulation of its demand on the other. Judges went on to state that "ruling out such responses would require more than we find in the First Amendment." The case thus makes it clear that a total ban of the advertising of alcoholic beverages or cigarette advertising would be constitutional.

M&V: *What about banning the kind of peripheral advertising that promotes the name recognition of the substance producer without necessarily advertising the product — such as the underwriting of sporting events or support of social issues?*

Shiffrin: A company that underwrites a sporting or community event is not doing it out of charity or sporting interest. Those kinds of promotions function to generate sales for the product, to create a good image for the company, to give additional name recognition to the company and its products. So that I think there is no distinction that can or should be made between product advertising and this kind of image advertising. I defy anyone to come forward from one of those companies and say that they are not trying to generate a good image that will help them increase the sales of their product. That's certainly what they would tell their shareholders, and I think everyone else knows it, too.

M&V: *Of course, just because something can be done, doesn't mean it should be done. Do you think bans on cigarette and alcohol advertising are a good idea?*

Shiffrin: There are grounds to worry about the effect on magazines, newspapers and other media that depend on alcohol and cigarette advertising. But when cigarette advertising was taken off television, most broadcasters managed to replace it.

Any risks need to be balanced against smoking's role in causing the deaths of 350,000 Americans a year. That's nearly a thousand every day, or one out of six deaths in the United States. If you add on to that the additional devastations caused by second-hand smoke, it's truly catastrophic. Although alcohol's role as a public health risk is a little different, the difference has no relation to constitutional issues. It's clear to me that advertising bans on both tobacco and alcoholic beverages would be a good idea — and would not be unconstitutional.

Jorge Molina is a free-lance illustrator in Los Angeles.

Cigarette companies have used reverence for the First Amendment to get broadcasters to air what functions as image advertising.

DEADLY PERSUASION:
7 Myths Alcohol Advertisers Want You to Believe

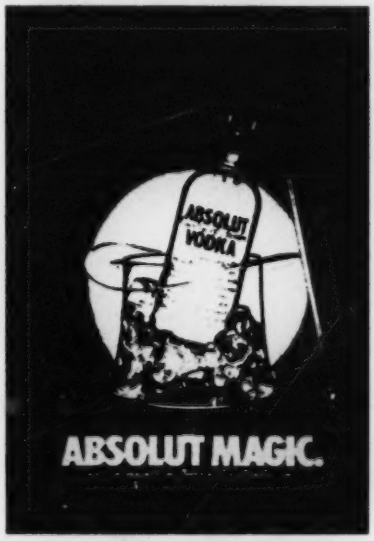
By Jean Kilbourne

"Absolut Magic" proclaims a print ad for a popular vodka. "Paradise found," headlines another. "Fairy tales can come true" says a third.

All these ads illustrate the major premise of alcohol advertising's mythology: Alcohol is magic, a magic carpet that can take you away. It can make you successful, sophisticated, sexy. Without it, your life would be dull, mediocre and ordinary.

Everyone wants to believe in happy endings. But as most of us know, the reality of alcohol for many people in our society is more like a horror story than a fairy tale. The liquid in the glass is definitely not a magic potion.

We are surrounded by the message that alcohol is fun, sexy, desirable and harmless. We get this message many times a day. We get it from the ads and, far more insidiously, we get it from the media, which depend upon alcohol advertising for a large share of their profits. Thanks to this connection, alcohol use tends to be glorified throughout the media and alcohol-related problems are routinely dismissed.



Alcohol is related to parties, good times, celebrations and fun, but it is also related to murder, suicide, unemployment and child abuse. These connections are never made in the ads. Of course, one would not expect them to be. The advertisers are selling their product and it is their job to erase any negative aspects as well as to enhance the positive ones. However, when the product is the nation's number one drug, there are consequences that go far beyond product sales.

Most people know that alcohol can cause problems. But how many realize that 10 percent of all deaths in the United States — including half of all homicides and at least one quarter of all suicides — are related to alcohol? The economic cost to the nation exceeds $100 billion a year. At least 13,000,000 Americans, about one out of 10, are alcoholic — the personal cost to them and their families is incalculable.

The tab for alcohol use doesn't end there. More than $2 billion a year — a sizable chunk of the over $90 billion the industry takes in annually — goes to prime the advertising and promotion pump and keep drinkers' money flowing freely. Problem drinkers and young people are the primary targets of these advertisers.

Of course, industry spokespeople disagree with this claim. Over and over again, their public statements assert that they are not trying to create new or heavier drinkers. Instead, they say they only want people who already drink to switch to another brand and to drink it in moderation. However, the most basic analysis of alcohol advertising reveals an emphasis on both recruiting new, young users and pushing heavy consumption of their products.

Indeed, advertising that encouraged only moderate drinking would be an economic failure. This becomes clear when you know that only 10 percent of the drinking-age population consumes over half of all alcoholic beverages sold. According to Robert Hammond, director of the Alcohol Research Information Service, if all 105 million drinkers of legal age consumed the official maximum "moderate" amount of alcohol — .99 ounces per day, the equivalent of about two drinks — the industry would suffer "a whopping 40 percent decrease in the sale of beer, wine and distilled spirits."

Young Prospects

These figures make it clear that if alcoholics were to recover — i.e., stop drinking — the alcoholic beverage industry's gross revenue would be cut in half. I can't believe that industry executives want that to happen. On the contrary, my 15-year study of alcohol advertising makes me certain that advertisers deliberately target the heavy drinker and devise ads designed to appeal to him or her. As with any product, the heavy user is the best customer. However, when the product is a drug, the heavy user is often an addict.

Not all problem drinkers are alcoholics. Youthful drinking is frequently characterized by binges and episodes of drunkenness, making young people a lucrative market for alcohol producers. According to the 1989 National Institute on Drug Abuse survey of high school seniors, 33 percent of students reported that they had consumed five or more drinks on one occasion within the previous two weeks. This group is vulnerable to ad campaigns that

present heavy drinking as fun and normal.

Media sell target audiences to the alcohol industry on a cost-per-drinker basis. "*Cosmopolitan* readers drank 21,794,000 glasses of beer in the last week... Isn't it time you gave *Cosmopolitan* a shot?" proclaims an ad aimed at the alcohol industry.

The primary purpose of the mass media is to deliver audiences to advertisers. It's worthwhile taking a closer look at how some of the common myths alcohol advertisers have created do this.

#1. *Drinking is a risk-free activity.*

Ads featuring copy like "The Joy of Six" imply that it is all right to consume large quantities of alcohol. Light beer ("great taste") has been developed and heavily promoted not for the dieter but for the heavy drinker. It is "less filling," and therefore one can drink more.

Ads like these tell the alcoholic and those around him or her that is all right, indeed splendid, to be obsessed by alcohol, to consume large amounts of it on a daily basis and to have it be a part of all one's activities. At the same time, all signs of trouble and any hint of addiction are erased.

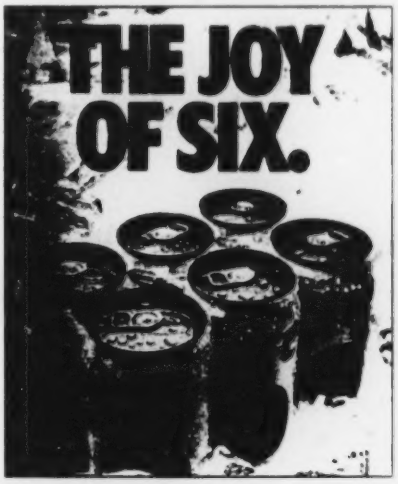
Every instance of use seems spontaneous, unique. The daily drinking takes place on yachts at sunset, not at kitchen tables in the morning. Bottles are magically unopened even when drinks have been poured. All signs of trouble and any hint of addiction are conspicuously avoided. There is no unpleasant drunkenness, only high spirits. Certainly alcohol-related problems such as alcohol-impaired driving, broken marriages, abused children, lost jobs, illness and premature death — are never even hinted at.

#2. *You can't survive without drinking.*

"It separates the exceptional from the merely ordinary," is how a Piper champagne ad puts it. By displaying a vibrant, imbibing couple against a black and white non-drinking background crowd, the advertiser contrasts the supposedly alive and colorful world of the drinker with dull reality. The alcohol has resurrected the couple, restored them to life.

In general, such advertising is expert at making the celebration of *drinking itself* — not a holiday, festivity or family event — a reason for imbibing ("Pour a Party," "Holidays were made for Michelob.")

At the heart of the alcoholic's dilemma and denial is this belief, this certainty, that alcohol is essential for life, that without it he



or she will literally die — or at best be condemned to a gray and two-dimensional wasteland, a half-life. These ads, and many others like them, present that nightmare as true, thus affirming and even glorifying one of the symptoms of the illness.

#3. *Problem drinking behaviors are normal.*

A shot of a sunset-lit bridge, captioned "At the end of the day, even a bridge seems to be heading home for Red," is actually advertising not just Scotch, but daily drinking. Often symptoms of alcohol, such as the need for a daily drink, are portrayed as not only normal, but desirable. A Smirnoff ad captioned "Hurry Sundown" features a vampirish lady immobilized in a coffin-like setting awaiting the revivifying effects of a vodka gimlet.

Slogans presenting drinking as "your own special island," and "your mountain hideaway" capitalize on the feelings of alienation and loneliness most alcoholics experience. Such ads seem to encourage solitary drinking, often one of the classic indicators of trouble with alcohol. They also distort the tragic reality that problem drinking increases — rather than alleviates — those feelings of isolation.

Alcohol lies at the center of these ads, just as it is at the center of the alcoholic's life.

#4. *Alcohol is a magic potion that can transform you.*

Alcohol advertising often spuriously links alcohol with precisely those attributes and qualities — happiness, wealth, prestige, sophistication, success, maturity, athletic ability, virility and sexual satisfaction — that the misuse of alcohol destroys.

For example, alcohol is linked with romance and sexual fulfillment, yet it is common knowledge that drunkenness often leads to sexual dysfunction. Less well known is the fact that people with drinking problems are seven times more likely to be separated or divorced.

Such ads often target young people, women and people of color, since members of these groups often feel powerless and are eager to identify with "successful" groups in our society. These ads sometimes connect "prestige" beverages with the aura of the rich and powerful or the goals of women's liberation.

Ads and products aimed at young people deserve special mention in these days when many preteens start drinking in junior high school. Cartoon and animal characters such as Spuds MacKenzie, Anheuser-Busch's canine mascot, are not as innocent as they appear. In one Christmas campaign, Spuds appeared in a Santa Claus suit, promoting 12-packs of Bud Light beer. In the summer of 1990 he was cavorting with ninjas, drawing on the popularity of the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* movie, a big hit with younger children.

Ads that portray drinking as a passport to adulthood, coupled with transitional products such as high-proof milkshakes and chocolate sodas, can be very successful lures for young drinkers.

"The trick for marketers is to project the right message in their advertisements to motivate those often motionless consumers to march down to the store or bar and exchange their money for a sip of liquor."

Advertising Age

#5. *Sports and alcohol go together.*

Alcohol consumption actually decreases athletic performance. However, numerous ads, like a Pabst Blue Ribbon poster showing a speeding bicyclist with a bottle of beer on her basket, wrongly imply that sports and alcohol are safely complementary activities. Others feature sponsorship of a wide range of sporting events or endorsements by sports stars.

#6. *If these products were truly dangerous, the media would tell us.*

Most media are reluctant to bite the hand that feeds them by spending $2 billion annually on advertising and promotion. Media coverage of the "war on drugs" seldom mentions the two major killers, alcohol and nicotine. From the coverage, one would assume that cocaine was the United States' most dangerous drug. However, while cocaine, heroin and other illegal drugs are linked with about 20,000 deaths a year, alcohol contributes to at least 100,000 and cigarettes more than 390,000 — or more than 1,000 a day.

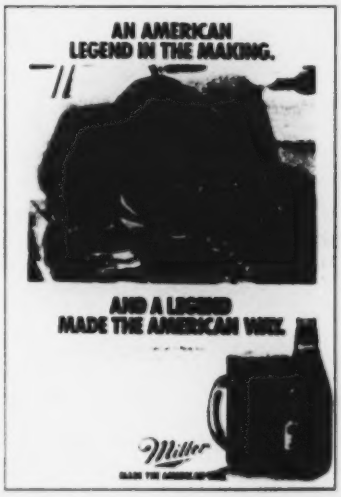
Although many media feature occasional stories about alcoholism, they usually treat it as a personal problem and focus on individual treatment solutions. Reports that probe alcohol's role in violence and other chronic problems are rare, while the role advertising plays in encouraging its use is almost never discussed.

#7. *Alcoholic beverage companies promote moderation in drinking.*

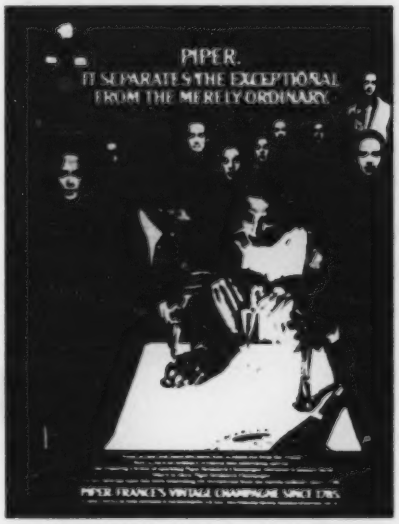
The current Budweiser "moderation" campaign says, "Know when to say when," as opposed to "Know when to say no." In the guise of a moderation message, this slogan actually suggests to young people that drinking beer is one way to demonstrate their control. It also perpetuates the myth that alcoholics are simply people who "don't know when to say when," irresponsibly engaging in willful misconduct, rather than people who are suffering from a disease that afflicts at least one in 10 drinkers.

Most of these programs are designed to encourage young people not to drive drunk. Although this is a laudable goal, it is interesting to note that few of the alcohol industry programs discourage or even question drunkenness *per se*. The tragic result is that many young people feel it is perfectly all right to get drunk, as long as they do not get behind the wheel of a car.

In any case, we might be better off without programs designed by the alcohol industry to promote ideas about "responsible" drinking that in fact subtly promote myths and damaging attitudes. For example, one program by Miller beer defines moderate drinking as up to four drinks a day. Copy for a Budweiser program called "The Buddy System" defines drunkenness as having "too much of a good time." Doesn't this imply that being sober is having a bad time, that being drunk and having a good time go together? Even the industry's "moderation" messages imply the advantages of heavy drinking.



One of the chief symptoms of the disease of alcoholism is the denial that there is a problem. In general, as a society we tend to deny the illness and to support the alibi system of the alcoholic. Advertising encourages this denial.



It may be impossible to prove conclusively that alcohol advertising affects consumption, but it clearly affects attitudes about drinking. The ads contribute to an environment of social acceptance of high-risk drinking and denial of related problems. In addition, media dependence on alcohol advertising discourages full and open discussion of the many problems associated with alcohol.

A major comprehensive effort is needed to prevent alcohol-related problems. Such an effort must include education, mass media campaigns, increased availability of treatment programs, and more effective deterrence policies. It must also include public policy changes that take into account that the individual acts within a social, economic and cultural environment that profoundly influences his or her choices. Such changes would include raising taxes on alcohol, putting clearly legible warning labels on the bottles and regulating the advertising.

Above all, we must become fully engaged in the struggle to solve alcohol-related problems. We must stop supporting the denial that is at the heart of the illness that alcohol advertising both perpetuates and depends upon both in the individual and in society as a whole.

What can be done? We can investigate the extent to which the media are influenced by their dependence on alcohol advertising. We can consider the possibility of further restricting or banning all alcohol advertising, as some other countries have done. We can insist on equal time for information commercials in the broadcast media. We can raise the taxes on alcohol and use the extra revenue to fund programs to prevent and treat the illness and educate the public. We can become more aware of the real messages in the ads and work to teach their implications and consequences to those we love and care for.

Jean Kilbourne, a visiting scholar at Wellesley College and member of the board of directors of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, lectures internationally. Her films include Still Killing Us Softly: Advertising's Image of Women *and the new* Advertising Alcohol: Calling the Shots. *See Resources on p. 31.*

CIGARETTES UNDER FIRE:

Blowing Away the PR Smoke Screen

By Richard W. Pollay

Although inseparable from the act of smoking, cigarette smoke is one substance that is hardly ever seen in ads and commercials for cigarettes. Evidently, its haze would obscure the illusion of youth and vigor advertisers attempt to project with healthy models and pure and pristine environments.

In a way that's ironic, because the "PR smokescreen" the industry has been producing for decades has been highly effective in camouflaging the pernicious nature of its activities. Even in these days of anti-smoking awareness, tobacco producers have been fighting a highly effective rear guard action aimed at reassuring and retaining concerned smokers and recruiting new ones to replace an increasing number of quitters. The industry's own records show how it's done. A closer look at 50 years of ads shows how good they have been at turning a pernicious product into a symbol of heath and good times.

Smokescreens

"Tobacco industry says it wants to halt kids' smoke," say headlines reporting public relations from the Tobacco Institute. Don't believe it. No matter how privileged or persuasive, this cigarette smoke screen is totally contradicted by facts emerging from archives and trials. The facts show that cigarette firms research the starting process and preferences of kids as young as 15 extensively, design ads to appeal to their emotional needs and are well aware of teen nicotine addiction.

> *Glowing visions of the "good life" counter and overwhelm all other information about an addiction that kills more than 1,000 people a day, more than heroin, crack, alcohol, fire, car accidents, homicides and AIDS combined.*
>
> **George Gerbner**

For every dollar spent on PR activities denying an interest in kids, many hundreds more will advertise cigarettes and recruit starters. More millions are spent to support a decades-long effort to minimize and obscure consumer judgments about smoking risks, reach new markets by appealing to women and minorities and reassure troubled "pre-quitters."

Thanks to recent ground-breaking suits seeking liability compensation for cancer victims, records of the industry's public relations firm, Hill & Knowlton, are now open at the Wisconsin State Historical Society. In addition, boxes of incriminating corporate records for virtually all cigarette makers and affiliates have been subpoenaed and reviewed by experts. They expose in detail what the cigarette firms seek to accomplish and how they go about it.

Since smoking dropouts from quitting — and dying — are high, continued success depends on a steady flow of recruits. The industry is dominated by the companies who recruit the most new, young smokers. "Young smokers represent the major opportunity group for the cigarette industry," said Canada's Imperial Tobacco Limited. A marketing executive quoted by the FTC said: "Market expansion in this industry means two things — kids and women. I think that governs the thinking of all the companies."

Much research and marketing effort is aimed at teenagers beginning at age 15. Memos about industry plans bear titles like "Youth Target Study" or "Project 16." Hidden camera interviews and surveys gather data on demographics (e.g. age, sex, family size), life style (taste in music, clothes, movies, hobbies, etc.), health (knowledge, rationalizations and concerns), and personality. The psychological research is highly sophisticated, measuring factors like ego strength, submissiveness, shrewdness, tendency toward guilty feelings and self-discipline. Different personality types are targeted, like Dakota's current efforts to reach "virile females."

Molding the Image

One of the purposes of cigarette advertising is to shape how others perceive the nicotine user, and his or her own social and self image. Advertisers know that peer group pressure is an important factor in kids' decision making. Thus they work consciously to use ads to shape group, as well as individual, perceptions.

According to corporate studies, adolescents' urge to display symbols of their desired independence can be turned into a motivation for smoking. Ads for Marlboro fit this model, since the cowboy is self-sufficient with no boss (parent/teacher). Selling a drug like nicotine — documented by the Surgeon General as addictive as well as lethal — as a symbol of

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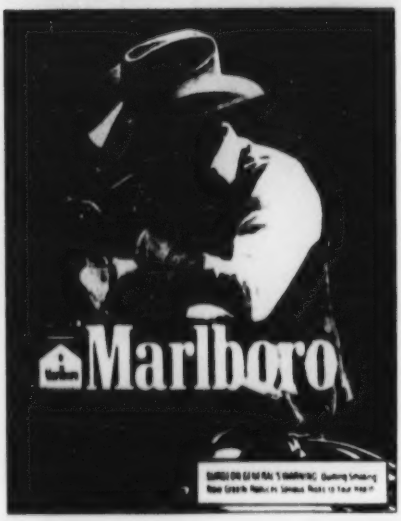

independence is ironic and tragically deceptive.

Many studies have shown that media that carry cigarette ads do a poor job with the health story. Editors are naturally reluctant to bite the hands that feed them, and the cigarette firms don't hesitate to use their clout if necessary. The world's largest ad agency, Saatchi & Saatchi, offended R. J. Reynolds Nabisco in 1989 by writing an ad for Northwest Airlines announcing a no smoking policy. The ad agency lost $84 million dollars of business, not from cigarettes, but from Nabisco Brands, owned by RJR. Cigarette firms also own all brands made by Kraft, Miller Beer and General Foods, keeping them among the top 10 advertisers, even on TV.

Promotional spending by U.S. cigarette manufacturers has more than tripled in the two decades since cigarette ads were banned on American radio and television — perhaps the clearest evidence of advertising's importance to these corporations. Instead of adding their TV advertising budgets to their profits they chose to invest instead in free sample distribution, billboards, magazine ads and sport and concert promotion.

Underestimating the Risks

The addictiveness and health risks of smoking are underestimated by even the well educated, thanks to advertising and the relative lack of media exposure to the medical catastrophe represented by lung cancer and other smoking-related illnesses. About 90 percent of today's college students, for example, underestimate the risks of smoking. Corporate research finds that starters "almost universally assume these risks will not apply to themselves because they will not become addicted." R. J. Reynolds found that: "However intriguing smoking was at 11, 12 or 13, by the age of 16 or 17 many regretted their use of cigarettes for health reasons and because they felt unable to stop smoking when they want to." Other research documents discuss how teens become "slaves to their cigarettes."

Firms also know that warnings are little noticed by kids and, if and when seen, go unheeded. But it's ironic that the 1964 U.S. law requiring warning labels on cigarette packages is seen as a triumph for consumer advocates.

Of the 15 proposals considered by Congress at the time, only the industry-sponsored bill passed. Even *Advertising Age* called the legislation that finally emerged

> SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.

> SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.

> SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.

— a version of the industry-sponsored proposal — "a shocking piece of special interest legislation." It weakened the warning wording, let the industry decide placement and type, did *not* apply to ads until the next decade (1972), handcuffed the FTC's regulatory powers for many years and blocked cities or states from passing more stringent laws. Political astuteness, media contacts and lobbying experience helped tobacco producers work a "damage control" victory.

Despite Congressional intentions, the warning formula that finally emerged from the legislative process is far from effective. The placement and printing of warnings on tobacco packages and ads minimizes the attention they get. Research shows that the warnings are rarely noticed and poorly recalled. Recent changes require a rotation of four different warnings and less ambiguous language but even these are all but illegible in billboards or transit ads, and are totally absent in sponsored sports events, like Virginia Slim-sponsored tennis. They actually do have one unintended effect — helping firms avoid lawsuits because they can tell courts and grieving families that smokers were warned.

Not all ads are aimed at kids, of course. Women have been targeted since the 1920s, when Marlboros were called "Mild as May" in an attempt to position them as a product for the growing women's market. Public relations photos from that era identified women smoking in public as lighting a "torch of liberty." As in many modern ads, some brands were portrayed as symbols of fashionable slimness. Virginia Slims tells today's women that "You've Come a Long Way Baby!" But in truth things have changed very little. Women, like men, are sold addiction and death by ads positioning cigarettes as symbols of freedom and style. Blacks, too, have long been targeted, but were years late in being offered filter products as an appeal to safety concerns.

Now ads from Philip Morris Companies Inc. feature endorsements from prominent African Americans for "Free Speech" ads. The company poses as a defender of freedom and liberty, while in reality protecting its record profits as a promoter of nicotine addiction.

A Leaky Pail

Frequent industry claims that cigarette advertising is merely intended to promote brand switching also don't stand up to analysis. Switchers are a small and unattractive market segment. Only about 10 percent or less of smokers are switchers in

...continued on page 16

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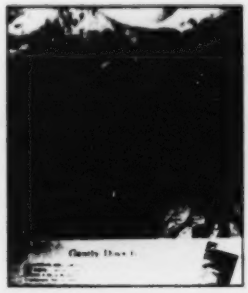
THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...

New images appear over the decades, but the goals of cigarette advertising remain the same.

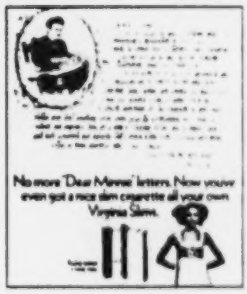
By Richard Pollay

In the 1920s, Marlboro targeted the growing group of women smokers by promising to be "as mild as May." The metamorphosis of this same cigarette that is today a symbol of rugged individualism shows how advertising shapes our perceptions of both the product and its users.

An indirect image approach featuring soft-selling visuals and positive language replaced easy-to-explode health claims in the '50s and '60s, as motivational researchers advised that battling over whose brand was safest was self-defeating.

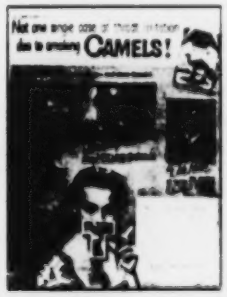


Cigarette producers capitalized on "Rosie the Riveter's" role as a symbol of the World War II drive to replace absent soldiers with women factory workers. The advertising ploy demonstrates marketers' efforts to keep smoking relevant to the changing nature of womens' roles.

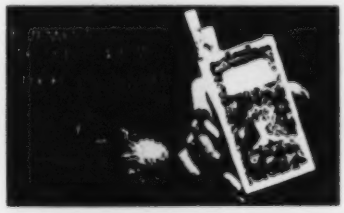


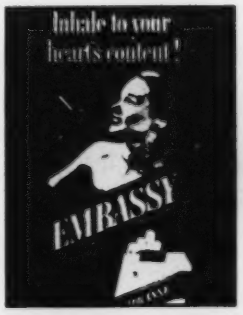
Glorification of independence characterizes recent image advertising for Marlboro and Virginia Slims, Philip Morris' top brands. The long-running Virginia Slims series co-opts feminist rhetoric, but depends on defiance of tradition by anorexic clothes horses.

This "Not One Single Case of Throat Irritation" endorsement from movie stars typifies the explicit health claims popular in the cigarette advertising of the '30s and '40s. John Wayne, unfortunately, was only one of many stars who testified to the risk of "throat irritation" before he died of lung cancer.

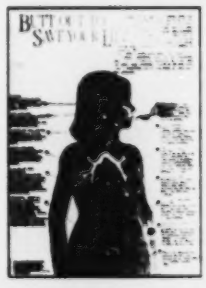


A cigarette with floral decorations is a logical extension of decades of advertising seeking to lure women smokers by associating cigarettes with fashion, status and slimness.





Stronger and stronger health claims became an advertising counterpoint to news reports about the danger of smoking in the '50s and '60s. Ads went so far as to imply scientific breakthroughs for "miracle tip" filters and endorsements from the federal government and the American Medical Association.



This graphic display of the health risks of smoking for women was disseminated widely in Canada shortly after cigarette advertising was banned. Would a U.S. cigarette advertising ban make it easier to publish such public service ads in U.S. magazines?

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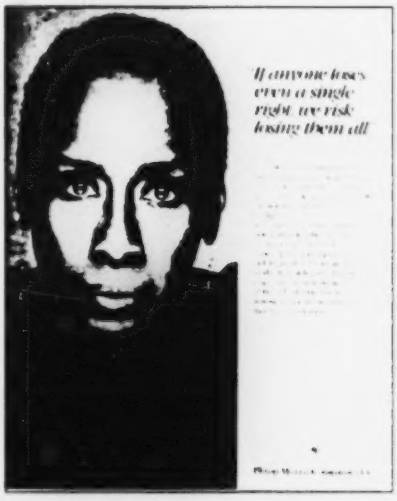
any given year, and these are mostly fickle "pre-quitters." Corporate documents identify efforts aimed at switchers as third in their priority list, behind advertising designed to attract new starters and reassure existing smokers. This is exactly what might be expected. If you had a leaky pail (business) and wanted to hold as much water (dollars spent on cigarettes) as possible, you would try to stop the leaks (block quitting) and/or open the taps to fill the pail faster (recruit starters). Stirring the water (promoting switching) would do you no good at all.

Ads are developed and carefully tested to insure that viewers get the intended message of an image, such as "self-reliance," "intelligent choice," or "no need to quit." Pictures in this case are worth far more than a thousand words. Because seeing is believing, they are experienced, not analyzed. Regulatory laws, which deal with the meanings of words, are ill-prepared to deal with the consequences of visual persuasion. Thus, pictures of healthy smokers are permissible and potent in a context in which verbal health claims would be regulated or ridiculed.

Ads Aimed at Health Concerns

Ads aimed at smokers concerned about health risks, a vast majority of adult smokers, appeal to their fears, offering reassurances about health and safety. The majority show pure, pristine environments with healthy, robust smokers fit for athletic challenges because "positive life-style images... effect the continued social acceptability of smoking." Most ads for filtered products imply relative safety, an idea sometimes ludicrously false. Kent filters were initially made from asbestos, trade named "micronite." The 1954 ads implied an American Medical Association endorsement that the AMA called "outrageous hucksterism." The tar and nicotine levels for filtered Pall Mall, Chesterfield and Lucky Strikes were once higher, not lower, than the unfiltered versions of the very same brands.

Cigarettes firms complain that they are heavily regulated. In truth, they need *not* comply with the Consumer Products Safety Commission, the Controlled Substances Act, the Federal Hazardous Substances Act, the Food and Drug Administration, or the Toxic Substances Act. Only the Federal Trade Commission has had periodic and limited authority over the years, and it has been frustrated, defeated and handcuffed.



Well-meaning Congressional initiatives over the years rarely get out of committee, or survive the lobbying counter-attack.

Other countries are taking far more substantial initiatives to control the ads and other promotional inducements to smoke. Partial or nearly total bans of cigarette promotion already exist or are now before legislatures in Canada, New Zealand, Norway, France, Italy and the entire European Common Market to name a few.

As a Canadian, I have direct experience with Canada's cigarette advertising ban, which became effective in January 1989. Canada's initiative to ban tobacco advertising could be a model for the United States because of the two countries' similar smoking history, shared tobacco suppliers, related cultures and free trade relationship. But at the moment, unfortunately, the Canadian ad ban is locked in controversy.

As soon as it took effect it was instantly challenged by separate suits from each and every cigarette firm. Legal challenges alleged that the ban violates freedom of commercial speech, grounds that would likely be used in the U.S. to fight similar restrictions. A trial spanned nearly a year and a decision from the Quebec Superior Court is pending.

The decision is uncertain, in part because the judge and lawyers are themselves addicted smokers, but no matter what the outcome, the case is certain to go to the nation's Supreme Court. The stakes are enormous both for cigarette firms enjoying record profits, and the Canadian public, currently experiencing 40,000 smoking-related deaths a year, according to statistics from the Canadian Health and Welfare Department. Canada's cigarette sales dropped seven percent during the first year of the ban. A comparable drop in the smoking-related death rate would represent a savings of 2,800 lives a year.

Ad Bans

Ad bans work, because advertising works. As long as advertising continues to be part of tobacco industry policy, they should be a necessary part of public policy, if only because of the message of warning they send. Unfortunately, many American residents, especially smokers, think that the U.S. would ban cigarette ads if smoking were highly hazardous, and that the lack of a ban implies that the product's hazards are not all that great. This faith in the U.S. government is sadly misplaced to date.

Unlike other products, cigarettes are deadly when used exactly as intended. The advertising images, and their intended meanings, are inherently false. Media need to develop a sense of responsibility for disseminating them. Western society needs to re-examine the commercial ethos that made them possible for so many decades — and is still keeping them going in the United States.

When reality backs you against a wall, tobacco executives seem to believe the time has come to change reality.

***ADBUSTERS* Quarterly**

Richard W. Pollay is a teaching and research professor at the business school of the University of British Columbia and curator of its History of Advertising Archives. He is a frequent researcher, writer and expert witness on the subject of cigarette advertising.

ANTI-SMOKING CAMPAIGN
Fights Fire With Advertising

By Eric Vollmer

As executives glower grimly around a crowded boardroom table, the tough-talking tobacco boss mutters to his listeners:

"We need more smokers! Every day 2,000 Americans stop smoking! Another 1,000 also quit. Well, technically, they die. That means that this business needs 3,000 fresh new 'volunteers' a day. So, forget all that cancer, lung disease, emphysema stuff! Gentleman, we're not in this business for our health!"

With that remark, the boardroom erupts in gales of sinister laughter.

Don't touch that dial. The commercial you just saw was actually working in your favor for a change. As the first television ad launched by the state of California's $28.6 million anti-smoking advertising blitz, this satirical skit represents a new trend to fight cigarette advertisers' appeals with their own techniques.

In another scenario, an Asian husband puffs a cigarette at breakfast as his pregnant wife helplessly belches out the smoke, a graphic message that serves as a strong counterweight to the joyous, healthy couples in so many cigarette ads.

As the first wave of a potential advertising revolution, these images owe their power to the groundswell of public opinion that carried a 1989 statewide anti-smoking referendum to victory in California.

WARNING: When used as directed, cigarettes kill.

The state's voters decided they weren't going to take it any more. So they created a fund to challenge the tobacco industry's aggressive marketing tactics. The initiative mandated a counter advertising program launched by the California Department of Health to spotlight smoking risks masked by typical ads.

"We're fighting fire with fire," says Kevin Goebel, a legislative analyst with the California branch of the activist organization Non-Smokers' Rights. He notes that since ads began to air in 1989, smoking in California has dropped 14 percent according to figures from the state Department of Health.

"We're not promoting a product, but the idea of health. One obvious barometer of our success so far is the tobacco industry's attempt to fend us off," Goebel adds.

Besides contracting the advertising firm Livingston & Keye to create the often-provocative ads, the Non-Smokers' Rights group has survived challenges from the smoking industry.

WARNING: The tobacco industry is not your friend.

The campaign aims to persuade more than 70 percent of the state's seven million smokers, or five million people, to quit smoking by the end of the '90s. Since the campaign is paid for by a sales tax on cigarettes, smokers are paying for the counter arguments themselves.

Throughout the United States, efforts like California's are supported by national support groups like the Advocacy Institute. Founded by well-known activist Michael Pertschuk, the Washington, D.C.-based institute offers advice and assistance to state and local groups as they formulate various anti-smoking strategies.

A Canadian group, the Toronto-based Non-Smokers' Rights Association, has also been highly visible with counter advertising blitzes against the tobacco lobby throughout Canada, according to David Sweanor, association spokesman. Among their efforts were full-page advertisements before tobacco company-sponsored that calling attention to the essential incongruity of sports events paid for by smoking.

When tobacco industry spokespersons claimed such tactics infringed upon the industry's rights the organization countered with a two-page spread in *Maclean's*, Canada's major news magazine, outlining a "catalogue of deception" that documented deceptive tobacco industry ad practices.

"We expose the realities, the costs to society in health care and life, that the tobacco industry disguises in misinformation and glamorous images to entice the young," Sweanor says. "There's no freedom to deceive drawn up in the Canadian constitution."

As media scholar Michael Schudson notes, advertising idealizes consumership over citizenship by picturing "reality as it should be'. . .glorifying the pleasures and freedoms of consumer choice." The endless pageant of products presented is supposed to make consumers more successful, lucky, beautiful and fulfilled.

Cigarette advertisers know the public is used to this logic of illusion-making. They even have a name for it: "partipulation," the art of making viewers participate in their own manipulation.

The "partipulation" level of tobacco advertising is high. Organizations such as Non-Smokers' Rights actually pull the curtain on the advertisers' Wizard of Oz world and ask consumers to take a closer look at the manipulation going on behind the curtain. The use of the political process to do more of the same is even more striking. When the product is as inherently risky as smoking, it's an intriguing alternative.

Eric Vollmer is a free-lance writer, teacher and a volunteer researcher for the Center for Media and Values.

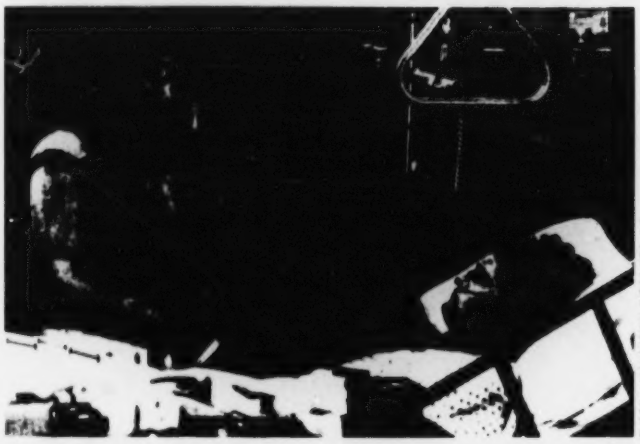
ALCOHOL AND TELEVISION...
And Now For Some Mixed Messages

By Kathryn Montgomery

On April 12 1989, ABC aired a shocking episode of its popular sitcom, *Growing Pains*. A close friend of the show's teenaged lead characters was seriously injured in a drunk driving crash, after having "just a few drinks." Hospitalized with his injuries, the youngster vowed to change his ways, grateful for his "second chance." Then, in a dramatic twist, the teenager suddenly died. As *Daily Variety* explained, the show's producers had decided to sacrifice the character to "break the typical sense of denial by young people that they're anything but immortal."

The "Second Chance" episode of *Growing Pains* is one of many recent instances when prime-time television was used to educate the public about substance abuse. This particular program was part of a major campaign launched in 1988 by Harvard University's School of Public Health. Its goal is to use entertainment TV to alert viewers to the dangers of drunk driving and to promote the idea of choosing a "designated driver" — someone who purposely abstains from drinking in order to safely drive drinking friends home.

From its outset, the Harvard Alcohol Project has been enthusiastically embraced by the television industry. With strong support from such industry heavyweights as former NBC chairman Grant Tinker and former president of CBS Frank Stanton, Harvard's Dr. Jay Winsten, who directs the project, has gotten cooperation from dozens of producers and writers in Hollywood, who have agreed to insert a line of dialogue, feature a designated driver poster, or in some cases, devote an entire episode to the drunk driving issue. By December 1990, Harvard reported that messages about drunk driving had appeared in 95 episodes, including such popular TV shows as *All My Children*, *The Cosby Show*, *Head of the Class*, and The *Young and the Restless*. The press has applauded the Harvard effort, with featured stories in many major media. The *New York Times* endorsed the project on its editorial page. *ABC News* profiled it in a special piece on the evening news, praising this "marriage of a simple idea and the power of TV."



Characters from Growing Pains *confront the consequences of driving under the influence.*

The success of the Harvard campaign would seem to indicate that entertainment TV is an effective forum for educating the public about alcohol abuse. Television is at the center of mainstream cultural activity, reaching large portions of the public with a constant stream of programming. As a popular art form, TV has unique power to engage viewers in ways that news and public affairs programs do not. For young people, it serves as an "electronic classroom," where lessons are taught each week through the actions of its characters.

"For young people, entertainment television serves as an 'electronic classroom,' where lessons are taught each week through the actions of its characters."

Kathryn C. Montgomery, *Mass Communication and Public Health*

But there are limitations to entertainment television's ability to effectively educate the public about alcohol. As we'll see from the brief overview that follows, the dramatic constraints that influence television's handling of all social issues have shaped the presentation of alcohol abuse in ways that often oversimplify this complex issue. Even more critical, however, are the conflicting roles played by television as a purveyor of information on the one hand, and a vehicle for advertising on the other.

Though the most highly publicized such effort in recent years, the Harvard Alcohol Project is by no means the first attempt to enlist the help of Hollywood in warning the public about the dangers of alcohol abuse. Since the '70s, public health advocates have been fairly successful at getting messages about alcohol woven into entertainment programs.

A decade ago, the U.S. Public Health Service was instrumental in convincing the producers of *M.A.S.H.* to do an episode where hard-drinking Hawkeye struggles with his alcohol dependence. Representatives from the service were also successful at reducing — for a time at least — the amount of "gratuitous drinking" in a number of prime-time shows. In the mid-'80s, the producers of *Cagney & Lacey* worked with the National Council on Alcoholism to develop a long-term storyline culminat-

ing in Christine Cagney's decision to join Alcoholics Anonymous. In 1987, former first lady Betty Ford was the subject of a TV movie which dramatized her descent into the depths of alcoholism and her family's courageous intervention to force her into a treatment center.

As these examples illustrate, alcohol abuse has proven to be compatible with the needs of entertainment programming. It lends itself easily to dramatization, thus providing story material for writers and producers. Simple messages can also be woven into the background of TV shows, with little disruption of plot. And the alcohol issue is relatively "safe," as opposed to such politically divisive topics as abortion or gun control.

The incorporation of pro-social messages on drunk driving and alcohol abuse has also served as an effective public relations tool for the TV industry, neutralizing public criticism, deflecting pressure, and in some cases, heading off regulatory efforts. In 1983, when a coalition of public health groups, spearheaded by the D.C.-based Center for Science in the Public Interest, proposed legislation that would ban alcohol advertising from radio and TV, the broadcast industry organized a massive counter campaign defeating the plan. The campaign included presenting before Congress excerpts from prime-time programs, featuring anti-alcohol scenes and dialogue.

The television industry considers alcohol abuse so important that it has launched several initiatives of its own. In 1982, the Caucus for Producers, Writers, and Directors issued a "White Paper" urging the creative community to treat alcohol-related issues more responsibly. A year later, an Entertainment Industries Council was set up to "deglamorize drug and alcohol use." EIC has issued periodic guidelines on issues related to substance abuse. The Academy of Television Arts and Sciences set up a Substance Abuse Committee in 1986.

What kind of job has entertainment television done in educating the public about alcohol abuse? On the one hand, the messages about alcohol which are increasingly peppered throughout programming may help to raise public awareness about the issue. By depicting certain healthy behaviors as normative, entertainment television may also play a role in prevention. If TV characters routinely decline alcohol, viewers may accept such behavior as the appropriate thing to do in their own lives.

On the other hand, entertainment television consistently frames the issue of alcohol abuse as a personal problem which can only be solved by individual behavioral change. Parents in prime-time shows frequently lecture their offspring about the importance of resisting peer pressure. But viewers are not likely to see the same TV parents organizing their communities against beer companies which sponsor youth-oriented sporting events. Nor are families on television inclined to complain to local liquor stores about the alcoholic beverages that are purposefully packaged and displayed to look like soft drinks. Alcohol abuse, like other social problems on TV remains "all in the family."

And finally, television gives double messages about alcohol. The scenes and dialogue in the programs are often in conflict with the carefully crafted commercials that punctuate the programming with increasing frequency. So, while characters in popular sitcoms warn each other about the dangers of alcohol abuse and drunk driving, slick ads in other parts of the schedule repeatedly drive home the message that beer and wine are essential to the good life. Such conflicting messages raise serious questions about whether a medium whose primary goal is to promote consumption can really be an effective advocate for public health.

"Characters seldom refused a drink and often drank alcohol to face a crises."

From a study by Warren Breed and James Defoe, 1982

The author wishes to thank the U. S. Office for Substance Abuse Prevention for a grant which partially funded this research.

Kathryn C. Montgomery, Ph.D., is a Washington, D.C.-based media consultant and the author of Target: Prime Time. Advocacy Groups and the Struggle over Entertainment Television.

Re:Action

Alcohol in Prime Time: 10 Things to Avoid

A set of guidelines for the entertainment community about the use of alcohol in TV entertainment shows has helped to raise the consciousness of producers and writers for over a decade.

Use it in your own viewing at home, or in your class or group to evaluate the use of alcoholic beverages on the programs you watch. **Check to see that shows don't:**

1. Glamorize the drinking or serving of alcohol as a sophisticated or adult pursuit;

2. Show the use of alcohol gratuitously—in those cases where another beverage might easily and fittingly be substituted;

3. Omit the grim consequences of alcohol misuse or alcoholism;

4. Deny characters a chance to refuse an alcoholic drink by statements such as "What will you have?:" or "Do you want a drink with the rest of the guys?"

5. Show drinking as an activity that is so normal everyone must indulge; allow for decision making by the character;

6. Show excessive drinking without consequences or with only pleasant consequences;

7. Show miraculous recoveries from alcoholism; normally, it is a difficult task;

8. Show children "lusting after" alcohol and the time when they are adult enough to drink it;

9. Associate drinking alcohol with macho pursuits in such a way that heavy drinking is a requirement for proving oneself as a man;

10. Omit the reaction of others to heavy alcoholic drinking especially when it may be a criticism.

—Target: Prime Time. Advocacy Groups and the Struggle Over Entertainment Television.

REFLECTION/ACTION FORUM

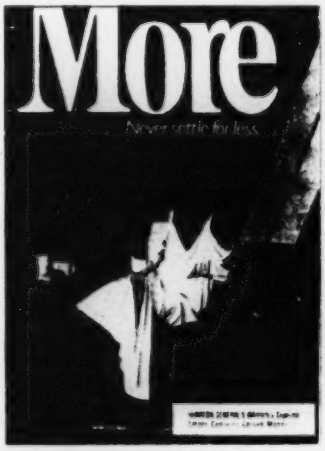
Target: Women

The Selling of Addiction to Women

By Carol Moog, Ph.D.

Beverly is an art director. She works with images all the time, and knows just how advertising tries to work on her. And she's fought hard to maintain her independence —to be herself. But I hear her talk about her friends, and she always ends up comparing *them* to some famous face: "Oh, you know her, she looks like Cheryl Tiegs." And when I ask her whom *she* looks like, Beverly glances down and shrugs, "Oh, nobody, just plain old me."

Everybody struggles to develop a sense of security, a sense of personal identity, but most of us end up constantly glancing around to see if we measure up to those around us — and that includes supercharged media models. We hate ourselves for it, especially if we can see exactly what buttons the advertisers are pushing, but many of us buy into the images just enough to wish we could do it all... be that thin or that rich or that happy or that confident. And then, telling ourselves that we're not affected by advertising, we find ourselves shelling out for the product.



It's one thing for a woman to purchase too many cosmetics or jeans in a convoluted effort to gain love and acceptance by measuring up to Madison Avenue. At that point she's buying into the cultural myth brought to us through the wonders of advertising, that women must be young, ingenuous, gorgeous, and innocuous. But what about when she's being lured with products which are dangerous, even lethal, and addictive? The stakes are much higher, and the trade-off for a woman isn't just a genuine sense of self, it may be her life.

Young women comprise America's fastest-growing population of smokers, and their rate of lung cancer has increased fivefold in the past two decades, finally beating breast cancer in the mortality sweepstakes. When the tobacco industry went fishing for women back in the late 1920s, what baited its advertisers' hooks? Promises of slender sophistication, pleasure, and freedom. When the tobacco industry hunts women of the 1990s what are its magic bullets? Promises of slender sophistication, pleasure and freedom.

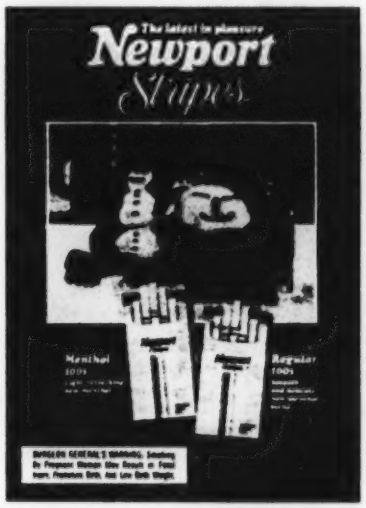
When Lucky Strike developed its famous slogan, "Reach for a Lucky Instead of a Sweet," complete with an image of a young, slim woman emerging from the shadow of an older, fatter self, Lucky sales skyrocketed 215 percent. The marketing success of Virginia Slims, powered by images of svelte, fashionable models liberated from sepia scenes of woman's drudgery and shapelessness before the Tobacco Liberation, is similarly impressive.

How can the same advertising strategies continue to be so effective with women? To be a smoker in America is to distinctly lose points in the winning-friends-and-influencing-people department. Everywhere smokers turn, they are faced with stomach-churning medical counsel, dramatic spasms of hacking, disdainful glowerings, and unsolicited advice on quitting. When I'm with a smoker who answers, "Smoking, please," to the hostess' seating question, the scene always reminds me of the one in Monty Python's *Life of Brian*, where, on Good Friday, prisoners are directed toward the proper sentencing: "Crucifixion, right this way." Why are so many women choosing to hang themselves on tobacco's cross?

Despite the real societal changes that have occurred in this culture with regard to women's career and role opportunities, little genuine progress has occurred psychologically. Repeatedly in my clinical practice, repeatedly in consumer interviews, I hear the stories of women who, underneath their mantles of intellect and achievement, remain addicted to external approval. They may look all grown-up on the outside, but inside many still have the insatiable needs and insecurities of children who have never been accepted and loved as competent, separate individuals.

Drugs such as tobacco and, of course,

alcohol, offer transient solutions to the problems of self-esteem and identity, not only because of the stress-reducing properties of these substances themselves, but because of the heightened independence and self-fulfillment that advertising constantly associates with their use. The particular images that tobacco and alcohol advertisers rely on most are those that feed into women's underlying sense of themselves as emotionally empty and vulnerable. They offer up tantalizing glimpses of endless pleasure and vitality.



In a recent ad for Newport lights, we see a young woman deliriously happy to be encased in a bizarre two-person sweater, seemingly designed to demonstrate the joy of symbiosis, for the purpose of selling the fantasy that she'll be "Alive with Pleasure!" She has no identity as a separate individual, her very life drawn from her connection with her masculine counterpart. As long as she smokes Newport Lights, her needs for emotional bonding will be met. Never mind that we see her hands outstretched beyond what she's already got, seeking still more "pleasure." She is addicted and insatiable — just the kind of woman a cigarette company wants her to stay.

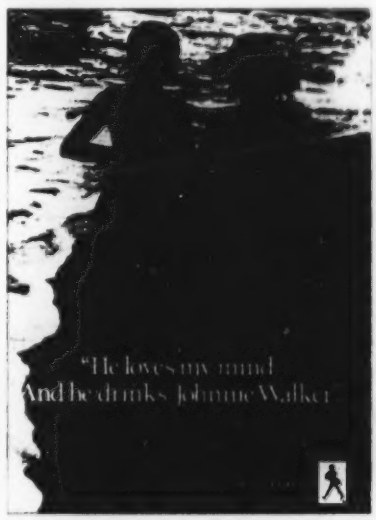
Decoding the Real Message

R.J. Reynolds' ad for More cigarettes taps into these feelings even more explicitly. Its appeal depends upon the fantasy of filling the bottomless pit of need and longing that drives the insecurities of so many women. Regressive desires for on-demand feedings are embodied by the cigarette brand name itself—*More*. Ask for it by name and you verbally reinforce both the addiction and the psychological drive behind it.

The model shown is close to a paragon of the cultural definition of feminine sophistication. She radiates self-confidence and insouciance (who cares if her elegant white dress gets dirtied by the pier?). This image of ease and individuality acts as a decoy to the unconscious question: How could this woman possibly be in a state of constant need? She seems to have it all; to want "more," and, as the subhead instructs, to "never settle for less," must be hallmarks of a mature, desirable individual.

But this ad goes the extra mile in getting its target to identify with this image: the green water and pier, the huge "More" across the top of the page, and the double white stripe to its right, all precisely match the design of the cigarette package she holds. She *is* the package. When you inhale a More cigarette, you internalize her image. And what is this role model's "favorite indulgence", as the body copy asks? Her "special reward" isn't really smoking (after all, smoking is a dirty habit which leads to unsightly spots on the lungs and she's all in white), it's "the time I spend with More." This denial of the addiction, the seeming innocence of this simple pleasure, is given heavy advertising support. And what is by her side to further uncouple her ties to the reality of her lethal "indulgence?" A glass of wine.

For addictions to maintain their hold, a huge amount of psychic energy must be invested in the defensive denial of the consequences of the behavior. Newport Stripes offers a stunning example of this kind of psychological sleight-of-hand in an ad which has as its centerpiece two hysterically laughing, nearly identical blonde women cuddling big, fat, jolly snow "babies" on their laps. They're little-girl-women-mommies, in exuberant good health (a glow heightened by the intensely hot pink color of the surrounding page). Their cigarettes are "smooth and delicate" (like a baby's skin) and they are "light, refreshing" (and harmless) as the candy features on their "babies." Why do so many young women smoke? For one thing, their mothers do. The messages in this ad insidiously support continuing the habit in the next generation by showing these delightful young mothers who enjoy "the latest in pleasure" and have fine chubby children (to whom they will pass on their addictions). The Surgeon General's Warning is the *piece de resistance* in this ad's denial of reality, and ironically, the selection of warnings is purely by chance: "Smoking by Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, and Low Birth Weight."



Women are constantly portrayed in tobacco and alcohol advertising as creatures of pleasure who, because of their childlike freedom from the ordinary humdrum of reality (growing old, getting cancer, becoming an alcoholic) live lives of fun, fulfillment and romance. Lack of an adult sense of identity and accountability is transmuted, through the wizardry of advertising's fog and mirrors into the imagery of women with independent spirits. The illusions of freedom obscure their slavery to their addictions.

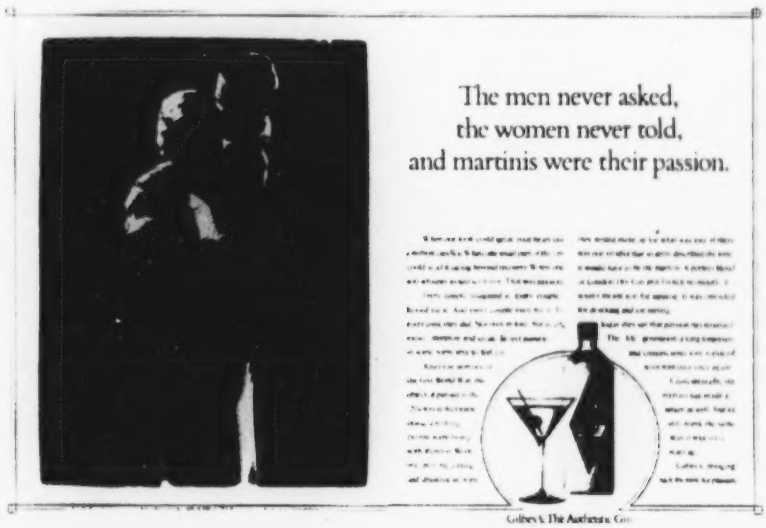
There they are, jogging along a perfect beach foamed with surf, two beautifully constructed women talking about a man (what else *do* women talk about?) whom they both seem to admire very much. They are interchangeable, and the headline could be coming from either: "He loves my mind. *And* he drinks Johnnie Walker."

How unfettered. The model's insecurity about being loved for *who* she is ("my mind") is so profound that she and her friend display their bikinied backsides, just to be sure. They are mirror images of each other and need each other's smiling agreement to shore up the illusion that it is natural and somehow intelligent for a woman to equate a man's valuing her "mind" with her appreciation of his brand of whiskey.

Regardless of the modern cultural wellspring of support and admiration for intellectually accomplished women, advertising reflects and magnifies women's insecurity about whether their acumen will really result in a man's approval. This piece for Johnnie Walker takes no chances and shows women

who have enough sense to know that they have minds, but keep them tucked under cute little baseball caps while they show their least threatening assets to the guys. As the tag line says, "Good taste is always an asset."

People who are secure enough to develop an enduring, mutual, affectionate relationship with another person have accomplished an extraordinarily difficult psychological task. Too often both men and women get stuck in a desperate determination not to expose their insecurities as they frantically try to fill a sense of emptiness with packaged facsimiles of love. This culture holds up an endless array of tempting surrogates to emotion, packaged like passion and romance but containing alcohol as their main ingredients.



Women searching for intimacy through fantasy are particularly vulnerable to this approach. And Gilbey's gin reels them in with the glamour of black and white film star lovers, filling the page with the sultry glow of moonlight and caresses while the headline works its magic, and begins to construct a script about the forging of relationships built completely on fantasy and held together by shared alcoholism: "The men never asked, the women never told, and martinis were their passion." Translation: "Shut up and drink, dear."

The copy promotes the endless pursuit of passion ("When one look could ignite your heart like a million candles") in lieu of a mature, enduring relationship. The pursuit of passion is fueled by a sense of inner deadness, and as such, is doomed to failure — even if it succeeds. The cycle is truly vicious: the inevitable loss of passion leaves an ever-increasing sense of worthlessness and insecurity. In other words, it's a winner if an advertiser wants to hook women on alcohol. As the copy tells us, after World War I, people were "drinking in hopes they would make up for what was lost." Drink to try to feel something, to try to feel real. Gilbey's tells its target consumers that martinis, which should, of course, be made with its brand of gin, "Weren't meant just for sipping." Yes, it takes a lot of booze to mask the pain and, as the story ends, bring back "the taste for passion." And what does Gilbey's, this dealer of delusions, call itself? The Authentic Gin.

The more women try to fill themselves up by propping up the *outside*, the more terrified they are about exposing who they really are on the *inside*. The discrepancy becomes too great, and the investment in the decoy self becomes too high to risk losing whatever security it does provide. Probably the single biggest barrier to love is the fear of psychological exposure, of being found out and found lacking. The need to hide can become obsessive. The shame can be stupefying. The denial of reality can become all-consuming. When advertisers of products like tobacco and alcohol lock in with people's deepest fears of being unlovable, they offer their products and images as the roads to love, when what they really provide are tickets to addiction.

Carol Moog, Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist and president of Creative Focus, an advertising consulting firm. She is also the author of "Are They Selling Her Lips?": Advertising and Identity, *a study of the psychological games advertisers play. William Morrow & Company, 105 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016; (800)843-9389, $18.95.*

Re:Action

Pro-Smoking Censorship: Women's Magazines Won't Bite the Hands That Feed Them

Ever wonder why you see few articles in women's magazines on the dangers of smoking and alcohol? As reported in the *Wellness Letter*, a study by Lauren Kessler of the University of Oregon, published in *Journalism Quarterly*, surveyed six large-circulation women's magazines that also regularly report on women's health issues: *Cosmopolitan, Good Housekeeping, Mademoiselle, McCall's, Woman's Day* and *Ms.* (*Ms.* has recently been redesigned to carry no ads, so the Kessler findings apply only to the old magazine.) All these magazines except *Good Housekeeping* ran cigarette ads. In the five years from 1983 to 1987, not one of them published any full-length feature, column, review or editorial on any aspect of the dangers of smoking. During this same five-year period, lung cancer surpassed breast cancer as the number-one cancer killer of women: Not one of these magazines mentioned it. (Kessler found 34 articles about breast cancer but none on lung cancer.) Three of the magazines occasionally published a 50-to-100-word news brief on the subject of smoking, but never referred to lung cancer, heart disease or the risks of smoking while pregnant. Instead they ran articles on such exotic conditions as narcolepsy, Guillain-Barre syndrome and sleepwalking. *Cosmopolitan* and *McCall's* actually published short items associating smoking positively with weight control.

Watch the magazines you read for their treatment of smoking and alcohol issues.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Target: Youth

Learning From Television: Commercials Influence Kids

Part of this article is based on the fall 1990 study, TV Beer Commercials and Children: Exposure, Attention, Beliefs, and Expectations About Drinking As An Adult, *which was co-authored by Larry Wallack, Joel Grube and Diana Cassady and funded by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety.*

Young people growing up in America draw on many sources of information in making decisions about important life issues. Decisions about whether and how to use alcoholic beverages are influenced by family, friends, school, church — and television. For far too many teenagers these decisions have significant, sometimes fatal consequences.

Many younger teenagers report heavier drinking. A recent survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control found that a quarter of eighth graders and more than one-third of tenth graders reported drinking five or more drinks during the past two weeks. In the same survey, approximately 30 percent of eighth graders and almost one-half of tenth graders said they had ridden during the past month with a driver who had just used alcohol or other drugs.

Television is a constant companion in the lives of these children who watch approximately 22 hours of television per week. Extensive research makes it clear that they learn significantly from what they watch. Young people use television to learn about aspects of life that they have yet to experience — including both intended and unintended instruction about alcohol contained in televised wine and beer commercials.

To answer the question "*What* are they learning?" researchers at the School of Public Health, University of California at Berkeley surveyed a scientific sample of 468 randomly selected fifth and sixth graders, most of them 11 and 12 years old. Each child was interviewed in person at his or her home.

Researchers found a number of significant correlations among children's exposure and attention to advertising and their beliefs about beer. Among them:

- Children's ability to recognize commercials and recall the brands advertised is significantly related to their level of exposure through weekend viewing and sports programming.
- Their ability to name brands of beers and match slogans with correct brand names relates to their exposure and attention to beer commercials.
- Children who pay the most attention to commercials are least likely to be skeptical about them. They are also most likely to think that beer drinking is cool and macho.
- A striking 88 percent of interviewed children could identify the frolicsome commercial canine Spuds MacKenzie and correctly link him with Bud Light.

Children who pay the most attention to beer commercials are least likely to be skeptical about them.

The key finding — that the children who pay the most attention to beer commercials have the highest expectation that they will drink as adults — has inescapable implications for policy makers worried about the effects of beer advertising on children.

Regardless of the intent of alcohol advertisers, it's obvious that children have wide exposure to beer commercials and are affected by the commercials they see. The youthful orientation of many commercials is hard to miss. Rather than professional health educators it is Spuds MacKenzie and his friends who are educating America's youth about America's number one drug.

Before he left office, former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop called for strict limits on the alcohol advertising messages reaching children and youth. For example, he recommended banning alcohol advertising on college campuses, and at sporting events and concerts where a high percentage of the audience is under the legal drinking age. He also recommended eliminating the use of celebrities who have a strong appeal to youth in beer advertising.

Consumer groups, youth workers and public health professionals are beginning to work together to focus public attention on advertising's role as a risk factor for teen alcohol problems. However, higher visibility for this issue on the public agenda is needed. Consumers should let beer companies — and their local media — know that young people are not an acceptable audience for their messages.

Unfortunately, finding examples of youth-flavored beer commercials and promotions is easy. The fight to let beer companies know that we're serious about protecting our children is an uphill struggle. This research about the effects of beer advertising on young people provides an essential first step.

Local organizations can help you learn more about the problem of teenage drinking. Students Against Driving Drunk, P.O. Box 800, Marlborough, MA 01752; (508)481-3568. Stop Teenage Addiction to Tobacco (STAT), see Resources on p. 31.

Vita Adams is a student at Otis Parsons Art Institute in Los Angeles.

Target: Hispanics

Cultural Dynamics Mold Marketing

By Bruce Maxwell and Michael Jacobson

The 1960s may have been the decade for black achievement, but the 1980s were "The Decade of the Hispanic," according to a slogan popular in the community.

One might think such a slogan was coined by a Hispanic organization. It wasn't. Instead, it was created as part of an advertising campaign by the Adolph Coors Company, a beer brewer whose relationship with Hispanics has been rocky at best. The Hispanic magazine *Nuestro* said it was "a sad irony" that the slogan was conceived by Coors "in order to sell more beer."

The Coors example makes it clear that alcohol companies have no shame when it comes to trying to hook Hispanics on their products. That lack of shame is exemplified by an advertising campaign for Olde English "800" malt liquor, manufactured by the Pabst Brewing Company.

In the billboard version of the ad, a buxom Hispanic woman wearing a string bikini crouches on the beach next to a tiger. Superimposed on the scene is a picture of a can of Olde English "800" malt liquor and the slogan in Spanish: "It's the Power."

Alcohol companies have no shame when it comes to trying to hook Hispanics on their products.

In promotional materials sent to liquor retailers, the brewer says billboards featuring the "Lady and the Tiger" design are "strategically placed in ethnic neighborhoods," and radio and television ads with the same theme are being run "in all major ethnic markets."

The cynicism in the campaign is clear, as is the message in the ads relating heavy drinking to sexual conquest. However, there are many other alcohol campaigns competing for the dubious honor of the "most offensive" aimed at Hispanics.

A series of billboards and subway posters sponsored by Glenmore Distilleries exploited the use of wine in Catholic ceremony. The Spanish-language ad showed a priest and a monk gazing toward a light shining from above while holding glasses of Felipe II brandy. Translated, the copy read: "To drink is not a sin."

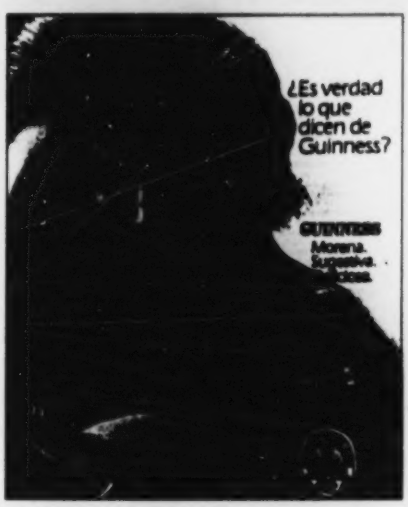
"This is one of the most appalling ads I've seen in recent years," said Marilyn Aguirre-Molina, assistant professor at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, who said it played off the Hispanic culture's respect for the Catholic Church, just as many ads focus on other aspects of Hispanic culture.

Many ads for beer and other products feature Latino sports heroes and other celebrities. In addition, such Spanish-language television shows as the Saturday-night hit Sabado Gigante (Giant Saturday) pitch brands such as Coors on the air. Host Don Francisco even leads the audience in singing advertising jingles.

Following extensive public criticism, Spanish-language television networks Telmundo and Univision dropped hard liquor advertising in the late '80s. Television stations have been able to do without the modest amount of lost advertising, but some observers fear that some Hispanic newspapers would shrink in size, or even fold, without advertising from the alcohol and tobacco industries.

In 1988, the National Association of Hispanic Publications gave Philip Morris, producer of Marlboro cigarettes and Miller beer, its company of the year award, showing once again the close link between Hispanic publications and the alcohol and tobacco industries.

A March 1989 issue of *Hispanic*, a leading community magazine, provides a telling example of these media links. An article on a world-record 119,000-person conga line featured a major editorial plug for Guinness Stout. Within less than 30 pages a full-page ad for the beverage reinforced the article's message. The sensual ad featured a bare-chested Hispanic man being stroked by a Hispanic woman whose lacy nightgown had fallen from her shoulder, exposing much of her right breast. The man faced the camera directly, while the woman's face was hidden by his chest. This subservience plays on the cultural dominance of Hispanic males.



In the same issue, a four-page article previewed a Latin American art show sponsored by Philip Morris, the top tobacco company and a leading brewer. Part of the marketing included a full-color, two-page ad listing Philip Morris subsidiaries.

Cultural nostalgia is a major theme in alcohol advertising to Latinos, according to Juana Mora, research analyst at the Los Angeles County Office of Alcohol Programs. "There is a deliberate practice of influencing beliefs and behaviors by appealing to the traditions, images and norms that many of us grew up with." Such advertising "distorts the true impact of excessive and high-risk consumption on health. These powerful advertising campaigns totally undermine the educational efforts of families, schools and non-profit organizations."

Michael Jacobson is executive director of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, and journalist Bruce Maxwell co-authored Marketing Disease to Hispanics. *Copyright 1989. Reprinted with permission from CSPI.* *See Resources p. 31.*

Target: African Americans

Cancer is an Equal Opportunity Disease

By Marilyn Kern-Foxworth

Before you finish reading this column three people will die of lung cancer associated with cigarette smoking. The chances that one or two of those people will be a person of color has increased significantly over the last decade.

The targeting of blacks in cigarette advertising became a matter of special concern in February 1990, when R.J. Reynolds Nabisco announced that the company would begin the test marketing of Uptown, a brand of cigarette specifically designed and marketed to attract African Americans.

During that same week, Dr. Harold Freeman, director of surgery at Harlem Hospital, published a report that concluded that a Harlem man's chances of living past the age of 40 were less than those of the average male resident of Bangladesh—one of the poorest countries in the world. According to Dr. Freeman's report, alcohol consumption and cigarette smoking (along with the risks of drug use and gang-related violence) were big factors in these projections.

Even more disturbing was a 1988 study by the National Center for Health Statistics comparing the 75.6 life expectancy of U.S. whites with the 69.2 average years of life that could be expected by African Americans. And this average concealed more disturbing news for black men. When the figures were analyzed by gender, African-American men's expectations of 64.9 years of life were nearly 10 years less than the 73.4 years of life their female counterparts could look forward to.

As an African American, my own experience with these risk factors didn't end with the statistics. I was tragically faced with the reality they represent in 1986 and 1989, when I lost a brother and a sister to cancer. My family is certainly not the only one to grieve, and these hard facts are resulting in a change of attitude from a decade ago.

At the beginning of the '80s, most African Americans were eager for the commercial power that came from being recognized as an important consumer group, worth targeting by corporations and advertisers. The product didn't matter.

In fact, one 1984 headline from the Black Newspaper Network, a company representing black newspapers to advertisers, proclaimed:

"Black people drink too much..."

"Too much, that is, for you to ignore the reaching power of black newspapers."

Now that the issue has been researched more thoroughly, African Americans are aware of the long-term health effects of alcohol and tobacco addiction. But I think it's still fair to say that the advertising has worked too well. Although they represent only 12 percent of the population, African Americans are America's leading consumers of both Scotch whiskey and malt liquor, accounting for 20 percent of Scotch whiskey and 32 percent of malt liquor sales in the United States.

Advertisers may find selling the dream a bit easier when the target is a group still struggling to make it.

Advertisers' relentless focus on these "good customers," visible in the advertising pages of consumer and specialty magazines and on the television screen, is beginning to create a backlash. When the Detroit Planning Commission found that 55 to 58 percent of the billboards in inner city neighborhoods were selling alcohol and tobacco, their fears were confirmed. Alberta Tinsley-Williams, county commissioner and founder of the Detroit-based Coalition Against Billboard Advertising of Alcohol and Tobacco, refers to billboards as "24-hour pushers of legal drugs." Unfortunately, we can assume that the same situation prevails in most inner-city neighborhoods.

Another issue of tremendous concern for me is the reliance of black-oriented media on alcohol and cigarette advertisers. Thumb through any black-oriented publication, from *Ebony* to *Essence* to the newly introduced news magazine *Emerge*, and the number of advertisements for alcohol and tobacco products is glaring. Keith Lockhart, president of Lockhart and Pettus, an African-American-owned New York City advertising agency, summarizes the problem succinctly when he states flatly: "If they kill off cigarette and alcohol advertising, black papers may as well stop printing."

Some African-American organizations are beginning to grapple with this conflict. Board members of the National Association of Black Journalists voted to decline tobacco company contributions to help subsidize its 1990 annual contribution despite the generous $20,000 they contributed to the convention budget in 1989.

Tobacco and alcohol companies also pour an extraordinary amount of money into the black community through their support of black culture. They are the chief benefactors of exhibitions, activities and other events

that affect the black experience. They support them by pouring millions of dollars into the programming of such organizations as the National Urban League, the United Negro College Fund and the NAACP, to name just a few. The controversy, highlighted by R.J. Reynolds' effort to develop Uptown, has become a double-edged sword for the black community. Thanks to these divisions, community leaders are forced to choose between foregoing the corporate money that supports the African-American heritage and its legacy and the knowledge that the funds they accept were earned in part by selling death to their brothers and sisters—a kind of philanthropic genocide.

Black Americans have been fighting discrimination and bigotry, prejudice, racism and Jim Crow for decades and even centuries. It is truly ironic that with so many problems still remaining, one of the rewards we have won is the chance to purchase our own early deaths.

Cancer by any measure is an "equal opportunity disease." But advertisers, with their slick copy and fantasies of power and success, may find selling the dream a bit easier when the target is a group still struggling to make it.

Or maybe the dreamers are awakening and the dream merchants have over-reached themselves. Following outcries from the black community, R.J. Reynolds dropped its plan to introduce Uptown cigarettes. Groups were formed to scrutinize the issues of alcohol and tobacco abuse within the African-American community. In early 1990, a coalition of 22 black, Hispanic and health organizations, led by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), urged the federal government to bar brewers from targeting their malt liquor ads at black and Hispanic consumers. A recently-released CSPI video on marketing alcohol to blacks complements an earlier printed study.

Ironically, the $10 million R.J. Reynolds spent on pre-production for a cigarette it didn't release may have turned into a multi-million investment in community awareness. Hopefully, the self-diagnosis will result in the determination that African-American lives are not for sale at any price.

Marilyn Kern-Foxworth, Ph.D., is associate professor in Texas A&M University's department of journalism. She's currently writing a book on the history and portrayal of African Americans in advertising.

Target: Billboards

Giants in the Advertising World

By Beth White

On city streets and federal highways alike, giant images of the Marlboro Man and sexy alcohol ads are so common that most people passively accept their presence. In 1988, the Federal Highway Administration estimated that more than 300,000 billboards lined federal highways in the U.S. This figure does not include billboards on city streets and state highways nor those erected without the permission of any government agency. But our passivity to the billboards is more than just inattention: While we think we are not paying attention, our minds are taking in images of successful, attractive, social people who drink and smoke. The message we subconsciously register is that we can have all of these wonderful traits if we consume the products. Although we know the risks of consuming alcohol and cigarettes, we are influenced by these subconscious ideas.

In addition, many people either do not know the seriousness of these drugs' effects or they think, "It won't happen to me." Especially susceptible are those with less education, specifically the poor and children. The fact is that tobacco and alcohol billboards fail to adequately point out the health risks of such products. According to the Center for Science in the Public Interest, approximately 450,000 deaths occur each year in the U.S. due to smoking and alcohol-related illnesses. However, the glamorous ads looming above our cities and highways give the impression that smoking and drinking alcohol are fun, healthy, sophisticated activities. Even with parental guidance, children continue to fall victim to the sex appeal and forbidden fruit they see on billboards. Although tobacco and alcohol companies claim they are not advertising to children, youngsters see the billboards and they learn from those images that drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes make you successful and happy.

Billions Spent

To reinforce the idea that these activities make everyone happy American tobacco companies spent an estimated $421 million dollars on outdoor advertising in 1989. Beer, wine and liquor producers spent about $111.3 million. Actually, cigarettes are the most heavily-advertised product in the U.S.,

with alcohol second.

However, four states in the U.S. (Vermont, Maine, Hawaii and Alaska) totally ban billboards and more than 1,000 towns, cities and counties have also done so. Despite advertisers' arguments that regulations and bans on billboards deprive them of their right to free speech, the U.S. Supreme Court has upheld the right of communities to enact such measures against all commercial billboards.

According to the *Citizens' Action Handbook on Alcohol and Tobacco Billboard Advertising*, individuals and groups can fight billboards in their communities. The handbook offers a plan of action to regulate billboard advertising on the local level.

- The first step is to obtain a temporary moratorium to prevent new billboards from being erected while the community decides what to do. It also allows those involved time to proceed carefully.
- In recent years, many cities have opted to ban the construction of new billboards. These regulations allow existing billboards to remain, although they cannot be substantially altered, repaired or relocated. Therefore, new roads or areas of the community will not be cluttered with new billboards, and the number of billboards will slowly diminish as old billboards are lost to redevelopment, cancelled leases, and attrition. This strategy costs taxpayers nothing.
- If banning construction of new billboards does not eliminate eyesores rapidly enough, the removal of existing billboards can be affected by designating billboards a nonconforming use in the zoning laws. One problem with this tactic is that the Federal Highway Beautification Act requires that billboard owners receive payment to remove signs along federal interstate and primary highways. Another difficulty is the possibility of litigation, which can drag on for years.
- Exchange provisions may be easier to enforce. These require billboard owners to remove one or more existing billboards before constructing a new one.
- On the other hand, restrictions on billboard advertising can be written into zoning laws. One such stipulation would make billboard owners inform citizens of construction. Each new sign must then receive public approval to be erected. Zoning laws can also include spacing and size conditions demanding that billboards be an appropriate distance from each other and not exceed a specific size.
- Also, permit fees can be used to deter advertisers from using billboards by making them more expensive to own and rent.
- Another method is to restrict the locations where billboards can be placed. Citizens can dictate that signs cannot be built in or within a certain distance from specific districts (i.e. historic, residential, agricultural and shopping) or structures (i.e. schools, parks, religious edifices and hospitals).
- Besides suggesting techniques to rid communities of the seductive images of smoking sailors and elegant alcohol drinkers, *Citizen's Action Handbook* proposes a plan by which to begin a campaign. It encourages gathering facts about the billboards in your community, writing the results in a report, finding allies and petitioning officials. When embarking on such a venture, the activist must be ready to fight the well-prepared advertiser.

These are a few of the many remedies overwhelmed citizens can use to avoid continued bombardment by billboard advertisements, especially for products that kill. The price of passivity is too great in human life — our children's lives — to make believe billboards have no effect. The giant ads do have an impact: they propagate myths and lies, they tell people to kill themselves. We do not have to pretend, anymore, that billboards do not offend us. As concerned members of society, we can fight for the health of the human race.

While tobacco and alcohol companies target low-income neighborhoods with billboards, their residents are dying in disproportionate numbers from these two legal drugs.

Citizen's Handbook on Alcohol and Tobacco Billboard Advertising

Beth White is resources coordinator of the Center for Media and Values, and a journalism graduate from the California State University at Northridge.

Mark Santos is a free-lance graphic artist in Los Angeles.

Citizen's Action Handbook on Alcohol and Tobacco Billboard Advertising *by Edward T. McMahon and Patricia A. Taylor (1990), CSPI Books.* *See Resources on p. 31.*

Re:Action

Report from the Tobacco Wars

Angered by his front-line exposure to smoking's devastating toll on human lives, Australian surgeon Arthur Chesterfield adopted the tactics of an urban guerilla to battle the tobacco industry.

Confessions of a Simple Surgeon recounts his experience as an enemy of cigarette advertising willing to use almost any tactics—including defacing billboards with graffiti and anti-smoking slogans. But it does more. It also takes viewers beyond the discussion of cancer, heart disease and addiction, to the initiation of smoking as a behavior.

The video is blunt and to the point, and offers a thorough discussion of the effect that tobacco advertising has on the worldwide epidemic of smoking. Dr. Evans draws a clear connection between industry marketing tactics and the hundreds of thousands of cases of nicotine-related disease and death.

Because of the uniqueness of this material and its call for action, *Confessions of a Simple Surgeon* has been adopted for use by the speakers bureau, other community education efforts and legislative testimony of the Greater Los Angeles Affiliate of the American Heart Association. It is also an excellent educational tool for use in groups, schools or workshops.

To obtain the video on a loan basis in the Los Angeles area, contact the Greater Los Angeles Affiliate of the American Heart Association at (213)385-4231. Otherwise it may be ordered from Pyramid Film and Video, Box 1048, Santa Monica, CA 90406; (800)421-2304, $225 purchase, $75 rental.

—Shelley Brown, community program consultant, GLA-AHA

Target: Third World

The New Fight Is Over Tobacco

By David Holley

Across East Asia and through much of the developing world, a battle is raging that some are calling a new Opium War. Today's fight is over tobacco. Western firms, faced with declining demand at home, are seeking to expand overseas. But they face fierce resistance from local tobacco industries, advocates of protective farm policies and outraged anti-smoking activists.

Lines are drawn for growing political conflict within and between nations. In the United States and Europe, those opposing the trade on health and ethical grounds are sharpening their attacks on tobacco defenders. Internationally, some tobacco disputes are escalating and more are waiting to erupt.

Approximately 500 million people alive today will die of tobacco-caused diseases, according to an estimate presented by Richard Peto, an Oxford University cancer expert, at an April 1990 conference on tobacco and health held in Australia.

We've driven the cigarette industry to scour the rest of the earth for new victims.

C. Everett Koop, former U.S. Surgeon General

The U.S. government, viewing tobacco sales as a trade issue, has weighed in on the side of the tobacco firms, using the threat of trade sanctions to force markets open in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. The tobacco industry argues that it is only seeking fair access to existing markets, not creating new smokers overseas.

But with each new inroad, opponents become more vocal. Opium War imagery adds power to their cause. Britain's victory in that 19th-Century conflict enabled its traders to continue exchanging Indian opium for Chinese tea and silk, making huge profits while devastating China.

Taiwan's anti-smoking activist David Yen, who lost a lung to cancer in 1972, has been compared to Lin Zexu, the Qing Dynasty official who led the anti-opium campaign that touched off that long-ago conflict with England. In South Korea, where resistance to foreign cigarettes has strong nationalistic overtones, anti-imports leader Kang Moon Kyu told the Hong Kong-based Far Eastern Economic Review that the key issue is protection of tobacco farmers, and "health is secondary."

U.S. tobacco exports are booming. American firms shipped nearly $5 billion worth of tobacco products overseas in 1989, according to a study by the Tobacco Merchants Association of the United States. Calling the rise in tobacco exports "a moral outrage," former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop noted that while smoking in the United States dropped five percent in 1989, U.S. tobacco exports rose 20 percent.

"I do not believe the United States will ever again be a good market for tobacco products," Koop said. "The curve is going down and accelerating. But if we feel good because we have beaten the cigarette industry on its own turf, we must realize that we've driven them to scour the rest of the earth for new victims."

The tobacco issue is also heating up in Europe. London's *Sunday Times* reported that thousands of tons of high-tar tobacco are being exported from European Community countries to developing nations at low, taxpayer-subsidized prices. Keith Ball, a chest surgeon and adviser to the World Health Organization, told the *Sunday Times* that today's European tobacco exports, much of which go to Africa, will eventually bring sharply increased cancer rates there.

Tobacco industry officials and Administration policy-makers argue that, because imports have long been shut out, American cigarette makers must advertise in these countries to let people know their products are available. But anti-smoking activists in developing nations usually view such advertising as anathema. In Latin America, tobacco advertising "is everywhere, at all times—theaters, opera houses, many sporting events, popular concerts," Carlos Alvarez Herrera, president of the Argentina-based Latin America Coordinating Council on Smoking Control complained.

The tobacco issue in China may ultimately be of greater significance than in any other country. Most Chinese men are heavy smokers and offering cigarettes is an important social ritual. Few people take the risk of cancer very seriously. The Chinese government has recently given some support to anti-smoking efforts, and Chinese media are becoming aware of the issue.

A report by the official New China News Agency quoted World Health Organization figures showing that tobacco-related diseases now take about 2.7 million lives per year worldwide. "Predictions for the future are grim," it added. "Of all the children alive today in China under 20 years of age, it is estimated that 50 million will die from the effects of tobacco use."

"In America, you cannot smoke anywhere—not at work, not in airplanes, not in restaurants," marveled an elderly Chinese man after a visit to relatives in the United States. "In China, you can smoke everywhere, even if there's a law against it. That's why all the American tobacco companies have started to sell in China. They can make more money here. You can't smoke American cigarettes in America, but you can in China!"

David Holley is a staff writer for the Los Angeles Times. *Copyright, 1990,* Los Angeles Times. *Reprinted by permission.*

Jennifer Weng is a free-lance illustrator in Los Angeles.

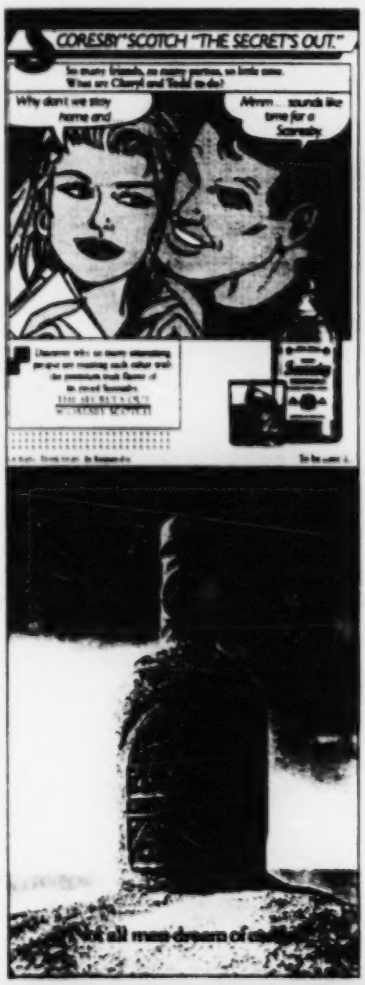
HOW ADVERTISERS SELL ADDICTION:

A Special Pull-out Page

By Jay F. Davis

Problem drinkers and young people are the primary targets of many alcohol advertisements. Young people are also the primary targets of many cigarette advertisements. In fact, "legal drug" advertising is most effective when it targets specific demographic groups — like young blacks and "virile white females" — two groups targeted by recent new brands Uptown and Dakota.

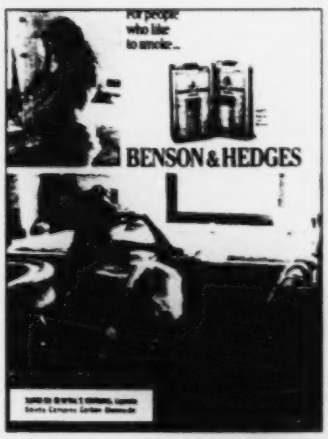
The photographs below illustrate some of the more common techniques used to sell addiction and suggest why the ads are so deceptive. Included are techniques which deliberately contradict known facts about the use and effect of these products.



Drinking Regularly is a Normal Part of Life.

In "Scoresby Scotch 'the Secret's Out'" we see why many experts say that alcohol ads target problem drinkers (since 25 percent of all drinkers drink 80 percent of all alcohol). Here we see two cartoon characters about to engage in a romantic interlude. Having a drink is introduced as a natural element of the evening — even a natural element of being at home. "So much to do.... Oh, let's just stay home and. . .have a drink(!?)."

Similarly, the giant sand-castle Chivas bottle is blown up to bigger-than-life size and becomes something that "men dream of" — as if this were a common dream for anyone except problem drinkers.



Smoking Cigarettes is Clean and Safe

The Benson & Hedges advertisement does something a little more subtle but just as powerful. Here is a woman in a pristine bathroom. She and the bathroom are clean and pure. To symbolize this, she is even wrapped in a white sheet. Yet she's smoking a cigarette. The implicit message is clear. Benson & Hedges are so clean and pure they won't clog your lungs or increase your risk of heart attack or cancer or muddy you or your image.

Targeting Youth

Beer and cigarette advertisements target youth but remain acceptable because they don't actually show children or underage youth using their products. Instead, they show the first legal age group beyond teenagers — college students and young adults. These advertising images appeal to teenagers in particular because teens want to imitate college-age adults and advertisers know it: "Get some air MacKenzie — the original party animal."

But Spuds in particular — along with the already infamous "cool dude" camels on the following page — illustrate another common advertising strategy of alcohol and cigarette marketers: the use of cute cartoon-like animals as a symbol for legal drug products. These characters appeal to a younger age group, suggesting that alcohol and tobacco advertisers want to instill name recognition at a very early age.

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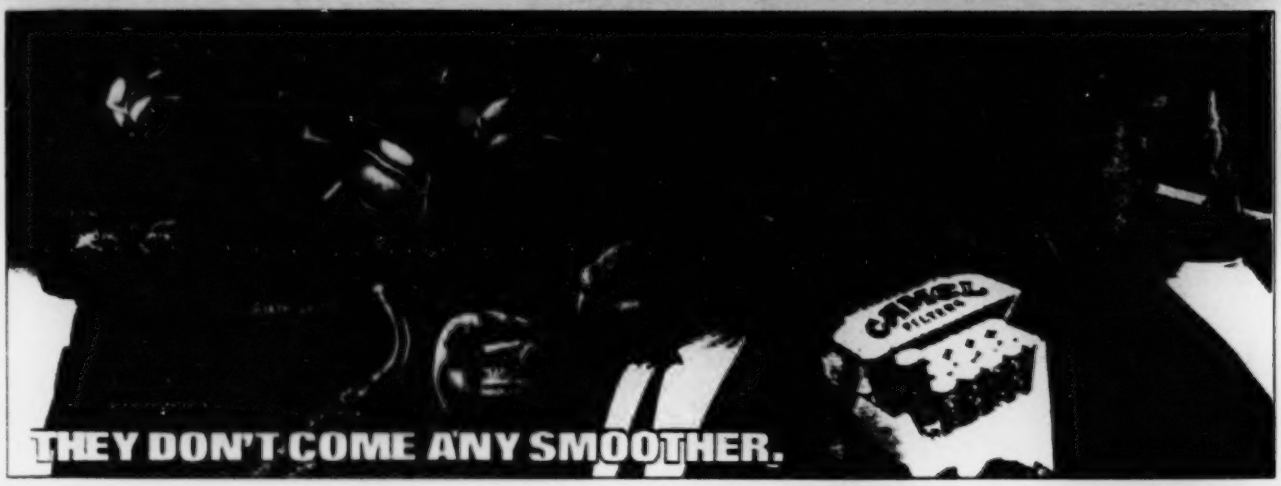
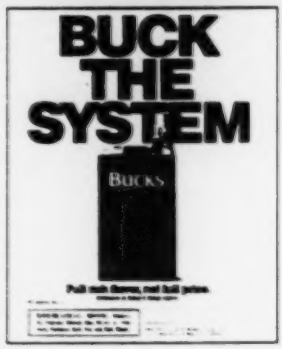
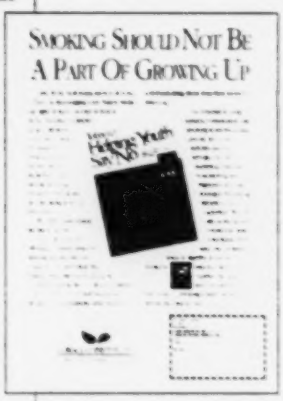


Appealing to Teens' Desire to Express Independence

Spuds and "cool dudes" aside, the most common way that cigarette advertisers market their addiction to teenagers is by appealing to teens' desire to symbolically display their newfound independence through smoking and drinking. Buck cigarettes "Buck the System" ad is an obvious example (along with the ever-present Virginia Slims ads which often thinly mask rebelliousness against parents as well as breaking traditional barriers imposed by men).

Not much comment is needed about Bud's "Heavy Metal" ad. No new techniques here, just blatant evidence that, despite denials to the contrary, Budweiser is appealing to youth to buy beer.





PR Advertising

Finally — and perhaps most disturbing — are the PR ads that alcohol and cigarette companies periodically place to position themselves as champions for the common good and welfare of our youth. According to researchers, for every dollar of advertising money spent on ads like these, the same companies spend hundreds of dollars recruiting new smokers and drinkers. Health and Human Services Director Louis Sullivan has aptly called the industry denial "little more than a smoke screen."

Now you try it.

Next time you see a billboard or advertisement for alcohol or cigarettes, try to figure out the underlying message. What myths are being perpetuated by the words, pictures and the overall campaign? Do you feel manipulated by the advertising techniques? In a class or group collect ads from magazines or take pictures of billboards in your city and write out what you really think the ads are saying. Send letters to the editor asking for equal time for your point of view. Write an article for your school or organization's newspaper about what you've learned.

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Media&Values magazine is a project of The Center for Media and Values, a not-for-profit educational membership organization which empowers the public by providing resources for critical awareness about media. Membership in the Center is $75/yr for organizations, or $30/yr for individuals.

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WATCH, READ, LISTEN

Resources for Follow-up

IN PRINT

Youth and Drugs: Society's Mixed Messages, Monograph #6, edited by Hank Resnik, examines the societal influences, especially media, that foster the use of drugs and offers approaches for prevention (1990). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Substance Abuse Prevention, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857; (301)468-2600, free.

Mass Communications and Public Health: Complexities and Conflicts. Charles Atkin and Lawrence Wallack editors, reviews media influence on public health, alcohol, tobacco and drugs (1990). Sage Publications, 2455 Teller Rd., Newbury Park, CA 91320; (805)499-0721, $17.95

Myths, Men, and Beer: An Analysis of Beer Commercials on Broadcast Television, 1987 by N. Postman, C. Nystrom, L. Strate and C. Weingartner (1987). ***TV Beer Commercials and Children: Exposure, Attention, Beliefs, and Expectations About Drinking as an Adult*** by Lawrence Wallack, Diana Cassady, and Joel Grube (1990). AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 1730 M Street NW, Suite 401, Washington, DC 20036; (202)775-1456, $5.

Media Strategies for Smoking Control: Guidelines, produced by the Advocacy Institute for the National Cancer Institute. NIH Publication No. 89-3013, March 1989. Expert advice to assist smoking control advocates in influencing the media to bring about changes in the public's knowledge, attitudes and behavior. National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, MD 20892; (800)4-CANCER, free.

A Media Opportunities Guidebook for Alcohol Policy, identifies obstacles for working with media on alcohol policy and recommends strategies for overcoming barriers. Available fall 1991 from the National Clearing House for Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852; (800)SAY-NO-TO, free.

"Relationship Between High School Student Smoking and Recognition of Cigarette Advertisements" by A. Goldstein, P. Fischer, J. Richards and D. Creten. March 1987 issue of *Journal of Pediatrics*.

"Teenage Drinking: Does Advertising Make a Difference?" by C. Atkin, J. Hocking and M. Block. Spring 1986 issue of *Journal of Communication*.

"Alcohol Advertising and Adolescent Drinking" by Lisa Lieberman and Mario Orlandi. Fall 1987 issue of *Alcohol Health & Research World*.

"Cigarette Advertising and Media Coverage of Smoking and Health" by Kenneth Warner. February 7, 1985 issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

SIGHT/SOUND

"Tobacco and You." Teens discuss the issue of why people use tobacco—with teacher's guide, 23 minutes (1990). Sunburst Communications, Inc., 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570; (800)431-1934, $149 purchase, $55 rental.

"Showdown on Tobacco Road," produced by Varied Directions, interviews doctors, smokers and authorities from both sides of the debate, 58 minutes (1987). PBS Video, 1320 Braddock Place, Alexandria, VA 22314-1698; (800)424-7963, $125 purchase.

"Dirty Business" features media specialist Tony Schwartz and his powerful anti-smoking media ads, 27 minutes (1988). Sunburst Communications, Inc., 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570; (800)431-1934 $169 purchase, $75 rental.

"Advertising Alcohol: Calling the Shots" (second edition) activist Jean Kilbourne points out the methods advertisers use to intoxicate society, 28 minutes (1991). Cambridge Documentary Films, P.O. Box 385, Cambridge, MA 02139; (617)354-3677, $350-$550 purchase, $43 rental.

"Kids Under the Influence" exposes the reasons for and consequences of teenage alcohol consumption, 58 minutes (1989). Films for the Humanities and Sciences, P.O. Box 2053, Princeton, NJ 08543-2053; (800)257-5126, $159 purchase, $75 rental.

"Promotion and Price: How the Alcohol Industry Targets Youth," a scripted slide presentation, great for workshops and conferences, 48 slides (1989). Trauma Foundation, San Francisco General Hospital, Building 1, Room 311, San Francisco, CA 94110; (415)821-8209, $139 purchase.

ORGANIZATIONS

Stop Teenage Addiction to Tobacco (STAT), a non-profit educational organization dedicated to reducing tobacco addiction among young people. Bi-annual newsletter and annual conference help community organizers keep updated on legislation and events, as well as giving advice on initiating projects. STAT, 121 Lyman St., #210, Springfield, MA 01103; (413)732-7828, $25.

One organization that is very active in the issues of alcohol, drugs and advertising is the Center for Science in the Public Interest. Order the resources below from: 1875 Connecticut Street NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20009-5728; (202)332-9110.

- ***The Booze Merchants: The Inebriating of America***, by Michael Jacobson, Robert Atkins and George Hacker, studies the advertising behavior of the alcohol industry and questions ethics of its marketing tactics (1983); $5.95.
- ***Citizen's Action Handbook on Alcohol and Tobacco Billboard Advertising*** by Edward T. McMahon and Patricia A. Taylor, gives a plan of action to fight billboard advertising in Black and Latino neighborhoods (1990); $6.95.
- ***Marketing Booze to Blacks*** examines the targeting of blacks in alcohol advertising through media and event sponsorship, by George A. Hacker, Ronald Collins and Michael Jacobson (1987); $4.95. Also available as a provocative video, 17 minutes (1990); $79.95.
- ***Marketing Disease to Hispanics*** reviews tactics of advertising and marketing tobacco, alcohol and junk foods to Hispanics, by Bruce Maxwell and Michael Jacobson (1989); $6.95.

MEDIA LITERACY
Just Say Yes

By Elizabeth Thoman, Executive Director

The bottom line tells the story. While organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Partnership for a Drug-Free America raise a few million to counter illegal drugs and alcohol abuse through public-service advertising, the alcohol and tobacco industries spend billions to reach potential consumers of their addictive products.

Direct advertising costs are paid for by consumers, but ultimately everyone pays for the long-term costs of substance-related illness, absenteeism and death.

True, our prevailing double standard does place illegal drugs (which cannot be advertised, of course) in the "Just Say No" category. But many observers note that media-inculcated "just say yes" consumerism encourages even the smallest children to take up habits that may eventually prove dangerous to their health.

It's time to try another approach. It's time to say yes to media literacy.

That means finding ways to make manipulative substance advertising counterproductive. This is why we're collaborating with the Scott Newman Center, a nonprofit dedicated to the prevention of substance abuse among youth, to develop a workshop process and videotape which will expand this issue into an exciting and effective curriculum resource for schools, churches, youth groups and community centers. *Selling Addiction: A Workshop Kit on Alcohol and Tobacco Advertising* will be ready in Fall, 1991. Preliminary plans exist for the Newman Center to distribute the Kit to its network of over 2,000 parenting groups. Also, we'll be working with them to develop a media literacy program for use in schools nationwide.

A Powerful Movement

Why all the interest in *media literacy* from a group working on substance abuse? The Newman Center is convinced that we cannot make progress in reducing our society's drug problem until young people understand how the addiction merchants are using the media to manipulate them.

That means media literacy. Media literacy seeks to challenge the unchallengeable by unmasking the claims and strategies of advertisers, by uncovering the magic of the story telling and special effects that can so easily manipulate us if we are passive and uncritical. At its core, media literacy is a powerful new educational movement that can help us reclaim the right to shape the myths and values that so subtly influence our daily lives — and those of our children.

This issue and the Workshop Kit are full of media literacy techniques that can be used in classrooms and parenting groups, in church basements and school cafeterias. What's needed are people to *use* them. Teachers. Scout leaders. Ministers. Social workers. Counselors. Parents.

If you are reading this magazine, think about doing something more than reading. Think about sharing / teaching what's in it to someone else. You don't have to be an "expert." The Workshop Kit provides step-by-step leader's guides to help you organize and conduct a provocative and lively session for adults or teens.

And when you finish your class/group on *Selling Addiction*, move on to other topics using kits from our previous issues: *Break the Lies That Bind* (sexism in the media); *News for the '90s* (values in the news) and *Parenting in a TV Age* (children and television). Soon you'll be thinking up your own topics and creating your own media literacy techniques.

And if you haven't already, join the Center for Media and Values. Membership in the Center puts you on the cutting edge of the growing media literacy movement. You'll get our special members' newsletter and many other benefits, including access to our hotline for ideas and help with program planning. Your membership also makes it possible for us to fund the development of future issues and kits — a new generation of media literacy resources for the 1990's. What could be more needed in these days of media saturation and consumer manipulation?

Yet we are finding it very difficult to raise the development money needed to create these resources. Few foundations have funding priorities in media and their grants are small. The Center is currently operating on dangerously thin finances. Payroll has been late more than once. Projects are delayed at the printer because we can't pay the bill.

We cannot make progress in reducing our society's drug problem until young people understand how the addiction merchants are using the media to manipulate them.

With no endowment, no reserve funds, no guaranteed income of any kind, the only funding we can count on is from our members, from people who *believe* that media literacy is one of the most significant issues of this decade. At this stage in the development of media literacy, every membership counts. And every extra donation — from $5 to $5000 — is more than welcome.

If we want our kids to say "no" to addiction and the materialistic values of media consumerism, we must say "yes" to media literacy. And "yes" to the Center for Media and Values. *Today.*

Back issues with future ideas about current trends

Some say that ***Media&Values*** *is ahead of its time, which means that these back issues offer you the information you need just in time to keep on top of the dynamic media age in which we live. Perhaps most helpful of all, each issue contains several unique features that make it ideal for use in classrooms, discussion groups, conferences, youth programs, parenting classes and more. As the leading resource for media awareness education,* ***Media&Values*** *is an invaluable reference and tool for teachers, for leaders, for everyone concerned about the media today.*

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	51	Media and the Earth: Challenging the Consumer Culture	$ 4.00	
	52-53	Children and Television: Growing Up in a Media World	$ 5.00	
	54-55	Fatal Attraction: The Selling of Addiction	$ 5.00	
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- *Everything you need for an engaging process of up to two hours with young people or adults.*

The media preach "just say no" to illegal drugs while depending heavily on cigarette and alcohol advertising for profits. Their expensively produced, creatively designed ads, in turn, are rated among the most memorable and entertaining campaigns in the media.

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- *uncover the myths behind cigarette and alcohol ads*
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- *identify how images and words combine to distort reality and appeal to our deepest human needs*
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Available: Fall, 1991. Price: $20-$25 (exact price to be determined). Send order to address above or call: 213/559-2944; Visa and MasterCard accepted.*

"...expands our understanding and vision of what the 'drug problem' really is... a superb resource."

— Michael Pertschuk, co-director, The Advocacy Institute

*The workshop kit includes one copy of this **Media&Values** special double issue, **Fatal Attraction: The Selling of Addiction**. Order additional copies at low quantity rates: 2-49: $3.75 ea.; 50 or more: $2.50 ea.*

** Or receive the kit free with your organizational membership in the Center for Media and Values: $75/year. Membership card and details inside.*